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HISTORIC SURVEY

OF

German Poetry,

INTERSPERSED WITH VARIOUS TRANSLATIONS.

BY

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W. TAYLOR, OF NORWICH.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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HISTORIC SURVEY

OF

GERMAN POETRY.

§ 1.

Introduction—Recapitulation of the preceding volume—Some deficiencies lamented—Some omissions supplied—Lavater—Salis—Claudius—Distinction between national and European poetry—Cosmopolite art the superior achievement.

THE history of poetry much includes that of public opinion. Like the vane glittering on the pinnacle of the temple, song, in all its movements and variations, marks the drift of popular impression. Whether it portrays sights or sentiments, whether it describes individuals or events, and whether it dwells on minute or mighty interests, it must still aim at sympathy, and give expression not to a solitary but to a social feeling. Some poets may learn of their ordinary surrounders, and only show the shallow currents of the scud, while others reach a superior atmosphere, and proclaim the less fickle tides of the rack; but all obey some impulse of their age, and all reveal the spirit of its continual course.

In the first three sections of the former volume it was observed, that the tribes employing the German tongue had migrated from the mouth toward the source

of the Donau, or Danube, and that the earliest traces of German verse are to be found in an elegy of Ovid, written at Tomi on the Euxine. These firstlings of the Teutonic Muse were composed by a native of Italy, in a metre imitated from the Latin; they were probably transmitted by Ovid to Rome, as his friend Cotta, to whom the elegy is addressed, had resided among the Goths, but they have unluckily not been preserved either in their original or in a translated form.

The earliest remains of German poetry (§ 4, 5, and 6,) are those sagas composed in an Anglo-saxon dialect, which constitute the principal portions of the Edda. According to Eginhardt, the pagan poems preserved among the Saxons were assembled by order of Charlemagne, when he compelled them to abjure heathenism. This collection has indeed not yet been discovered in any French library; but as the followers of Wittikind, who refused to undergo baptism, withdrew with their leader into Norway, and thence at a later period colonized Iceland, it is evident that the Icelandic remains must consist nearly of the same documents, which the converted Saxons had given up. A comprehensive edition of these rhythmical reliques, learnedly translated and critically commented, may still be a desideratum; but Schlötzer's *Isländische Litteratur und Geschichte* (Göttingen, 1773) furnishes excellent preparations for the undertaking.

Concerning the Lombard period (§ 7) more perhaps might be ascertained than any documents within my reach have enabled me to record, or authorized me to infer. In addition to those enumerated at p. 97, should have been cited the *Historia Laurini, Nanorum Regis, et Theodorici Veronensis* published in P. F. Suhm's

Symbolæ ad Literaturam Teutonicam Antiquiorem, (Havniæ, 1787). It is a narrative poem full of fancy, which the learned editor ascribes to the Swabian minstrel (p. xvii), Henry of Ofterdingen, and which may be thought to have laid the train for the original personification of Oberon.

Indeed if all those Swabian metrical romances, in which Theodoric of Verona and his champions are the central heroes, were separately edited, and analyzed critically, it is not impossible that specious evidence could be adduced in favor of the supposition, that these epic poems are mere Swabian refashionments (*rifacimento* is the Italian word which I attempt to recoin in the legal die of domestic analogy) of pre-existing Lombard story-books. In this case the metrical romance may have originated in Lombardy; for the reign of Theodoric is prior to the earliest rimed tales of Normandy; and the state of Italian culture might well suggest to the barbarians of the north the first composition of versified chronicles.

From an epistle of Cassiodorus (lib. i, epist. 41), it appears that Theodoric patronized minstrelsy, and deputed in 497 to Louis, or Clovis, king of the Franks, a harper who accompanied his instrument with song, and who was empowered to negociate for the release of some prisoners. This minstrel, having been sent to a Frankish king, must evidently have employed a German dialect.

In Alfred's translation of Boethius, the first chapter, which mentions the royal family of Lombardy, favours the suspicion that Alfred had before him, and was assisted by, a Lombard version of Boethius, which is likely to have contained metrical passages, as do the better copies of Alfred's version. See Rawlinson's

edition of Boethius in Anglo-saxon, (Oxoniæ, 1698). If, indeed, the translation of Boethius, imported by Alfred, be any thing more than a Lombard document; for the Lombards were originally Anglo-saxons from between the Elbe and the Oder.

Anastasius, in his Life of Pope Leo III, mentions that there was already in the year 800 a *schola Saxonum* at Rome; where missionaries were educated to be distributed over the gothic north. As the Lombards were conversant with the Italian language, and of all the Germans were the most contiguous to the papal see, it is natural they should have furnished the first teachers; and through them, no doubt the Anglo-saxon became the missionary language.

The Anglo-saxon alphabet is plainly derived from the Italian; and, in like manner, pronounces the letter *c* as *ch* before the vowels *e* and *i*. Thus the words *witch* and *chide* are spelled in Anglo-saxon, *wice* and *cidan*. Now, it is in this missionary language, this Lombard Saxon, that all the Anglo-saxon remains exist; for no English province retains vernacular traces of the inflections adopted in its grammar.

With the ensuing sections (8, 9, 10, and 11,) I feel less dissatisfied, having had authorities more copious to consult, and specimens more various to adduce; yet perhaps the sacrifices made to compression may have left in places a something to desiderate.

The twelvth section has incurred much animadversion: both in correspondence and in print I have been assailed with conflicting hostilities, without their impairing however my private sense of its equity: the English people have too long been accustomed to view the history of the Reformation through the coloured spectacles of a clergy whom it has enriched, not through those of a citizenry whom it has oppressed.

In the thirteenth section might have been added to the Swiss groop of poets the names of Lavater and Salis: they flourished later than Bodmer, Haller, and Gesner; yet they attained a degree of popularity which entitles them to distinct notice: and they both were victims to a patriotism called into action by the French revolution.

Lavater indeed was rather a prose-writer than a poet; but there are metrical productions of his which justify mentioning him in this Survey. He was born at Zurich in 1741 on the 15th of November, baptized by the names John Caspar, educated in the schools of his native city for the office of protestant minister, and, after attaining deacon's orders, was sent in 1763 to Berlin for the purpose of residing some time under the roof of a pastor named Spalding, whose moral worth, tolerant moderation, and evangelical piety, it was wished to press on the imitation of the pupil. The parents of Lavater had connections in the corporation of Zurich; but it was not until 1769 that any adapted vacancy occurred in the city-preferment, when Lavater first became permanently attached to the church of Saint Peter, and finally ascended therein to the office of chief pastor.

During his probationary years Lavater published several poetic works; (1) Patriotic Songs of the Swiss; (2) Sacred Hymns; (3) The new Messiad, a gospel in verse, a metrical diatessaron, which affects a close adherence to scriptural phraseology and authority; (4) Joseph of Arimathea, a spiritual metrical romance; (5) The Human Heart, a didactic poem. All these publications acquired circulation in the religious, not in the fashionable world; they tend to assuade a benevolent sensibility, theopathetic affections, and

evangelical doctrines; but they exhibit a leaning to credulity and to contemplative piety. The patriotic songs breathe a warm love of liberty. There is poetry of imagination also in his "Prospects into Eternity," although this visionary future state is painted in humble prose.

A more conspicuous portion of Lavater's works are his *Physiognomic Fragments* in four volumes quarto, which made the tour of Europe. He also wrote many professional books. During the French occupation of Switzerland in 1798, Lavater addressed a spirited remonstrance to Rewbell in behalf of the independent liberty of his country. This publication gave offence to the Parisian director, and Lavater was forcibly removed to Basle. After the termination of his exile, he drew up and published an account of it; but when the French in 1799 reoccupied Zurich, a french soldier fired at him and wounded him in the abdomen: he never recovered from the effects of this injury, although he lived in impaired comfort full fifteen months after its infliction. The life of Lavater was written by George Gesner his son-in-law, and appeared at Zurich in 3 vols. 8vo. 1802.

Johann Gaudenz von Salis was born in December 1762, at Seewis in the Grisons, and placed by his noble relations in military service. At the beginning of the French revolution he was a captain in the Swiss guard at Versailles; but served as a private in the lines under the command of General Montesquiou, during the conquest of Savoy. He afterwards, in 1799 it is said, became Inspector-general of the militia in Switzerland, which office compelled a somewhat versatile residence; but he finally settled at Malans, in his native province, where he died a few years after.

Lyric and elegiac poetry was the walk in which he delighted to stray; and his style has sensibly been influenced by the manner of his friend and editor Matthison. A pleasing ode to Spring of his writing has been translated in the Specimens of German Lyric Poets, printed for Boosey in 1823. His *Hymn to the month of March*, his *Infancy*, and his *Sighs for Evening*, are the most remembered of his productions.

In the four concluding sections (14, 15, 16, and 17) I have not yet discovered any important omission; still, in the Hamburg groop of poets, it might have been well to allot a few words to Matthew Claudius, who was born in 1743, at Rienfeld, not far from Lubeck. He resided eventually at Wandsbeck, near Hamburg, and was, it is said, the proprietor of a carrier's waggon; in allusion to which apparently, on the title-page to his publications, he calls himself *Asmus, omnia secum portans, the Wandsbeck messenger.*

This miscellany consists of several volumes containing prose and verse, and, in a peculiar and truly German vein of humor, satirizes the vices and follies of his countrymen, or inculcates lessons of justice, charity, patriotism, and religion. Among the songs of Claudius, one of the best is entitled Phidile, or Fidele, and, as it has been happily versified by an anonymous poet, I take the liberty of transcribing it.

PHIDILE.

PART THE FIRST.

Scarse sixteen summers had I seen
  Among my native bowers,
Nor stray'd my thoughts beyond the green,
  The garden, and the flowers.

Till once a stranger-youth appear'd,
I neither wish'd nor sought him;
He came, but whence I never heard,
And spoke what love had taught him.

His hair in graceful ringlets play'd,
As wanton Zephyrs blew them,
And o'er his comely shoulders stray'd;
I was quite charm'd to view them.

His speaking eyes of azure hue
Seem'd ever softly suing;
And such an eye, so clear and blue,
Ne'er shone for maid's undoing.

His face was fair, his cheek was red
With blushes ever burning;
And all he spoke was nicely said,
Tho' far beyond my learning.

Where'er I stray'd, the youth was nigh,
His looks soft sorrows speaking;
Sweet maid! he 'd say, and gaze and sigh
As if his heart were breaking.

And once, as low his head he hung,
I kindly askt his meaning;
When round my neck his arms he flung,
Soft tears his grief explaining.

Such freedom ne'er was ta'en till now,
And now 't was unoffending;
Shame spread my cheek with ruddy glow,
My eyes kept downward bending.

Nor aught I spoke: my looks he read
As if in anger burning.
No not one word: away he sped—
Ah would he were returning!

PHIDILE.

PART THE SECOND.

Written immediately after the marriage ceremony.

God's blessing light upon your head,
That you have given him to me so:
O reverend sir, my heart's blood sped
Never so throbbingly as now.

And William's heart was beating too,
When you enquir'd, in tone severe,
If he would faithful live and true,
Till death shall part our union here.

His glistening eye-balls seem'd to speak
As would he clasp me to his heart,
The color mantled on his cheek,
And the bright tear began to start.

I too, my William, felt yet more,
Nor will I e'er forsake thy side,
If well or sick, if rich or poor,
Let better or let worse betide.

I 'll always be about thy home,
And shun not want or woe with thee;
My trusty William, thou alone
Shalt be my soul's delight and glee.

Thou only shalt be all to me,
God is the witness to my vow;
If death take sooner me or thee,
We 'll meet above as erst below.

A singular and characteristic poem of Claudius, is the *Morning-hymn of a countryman*, at the beginning of the second volume; in which the Sun is addressed

in a most natural and even trivial manner, but in the notes to which recondite Greek authorities are adduced for every epithet and half line, with a happy persiflage of pedantry. Claudius has been aptly appretiated by the translator, from whom the first of these specimens is borrowed: " his thoughts are generally just, and his invention happy; but his plan has seldom depth, and his execution is frequently defective: he is singular rather than original; sometimes extravagant, when he would be thought humorous, and affected when he means to be witty."

There is about the poetry of Claudius, as about that of Gleim and Klopstock, a certain locality of taste, a raciness, a flavor of the soil, a native Germanity of manner, which adapts it the more for national, and the less for European, approbation. Ramler, on the contrary, Lessing, and especially Wieland, have adopted a more cosmopolite manner: their writings will better bear translation, and win an easier way to foreign admiration. They attend to general not to peculiar nature, both in choice of topic, and in method of delineation.

Among ourselves, Shakspeare, among the Scottish, Burns, have perhaps worshipped too much the genius of the place, and have had long to wait for continental applause. Pope, on the other hand, and Macpherson (or Ossian) have chosen less conventional forms of art, and became immediately popular in other countries, as Lord Byron has done since. And surely the preference must be awarded to those writers, who shake off the prejudices of their birth-place, instead of clinging to them; who, not content with being distinguished burgesses of a close corporation, aspire to become eminent citizens of the world. Theirs is the

higher stage of merit, who, far from flattering the moral, religious, or patriotic, bigotries of their neighbours, appeal to the instinctive morality of man, bow to the genius of universal nature, and promulgate the dictates of an intelligent and comprehensive philanthropy.

§ 2.

Göttingen groop of poets—Kästner—Zachariä—Bürger—his life—his ballads—The Wild Hunter—The Parson's Daughter—Ellenore—Minor Poems.

FROM Berlin let us travel to Göttingen; for such was announced, at the beginning of the thirteenth section, as the probable order of the ensuing sketches.

Abraham Gotthelf Kästner was born at Leipzig in 1719. His father, a professor of jurisprudence, gave him a solicitous education, and, already in his thirteenth year, encouraged him to attend the university-lectures. Mathematics was his favourite study, and he was so early a respectable proficient, that at fifteen he practised as a notary public. At nineteen he became master of arts. Not only had he acquired the classical but the principal modern languages, and was skilled in French, Italian, Spanish, Low-dutch, Swedish, and English. For several years he edited a miscellany entitled, "Amusements of Literature," to which he contributed many original and many translated articles. But having been promoted in 1746 to the mathematical professorship at Leipzig, he deserted these juvenile pursuits for the severer science, which he had now to teach, and in which he acquired a high and European reputation. In 1756 he was invited to Göttingen, there also to fill the chair of mathematical professor, which was more liberally endowed than that

of Leipzig; and he continued to lecture in this department with increasing celebrity until his death, in 1800.

Some didactic poems of Kästner exist in rimed alexandrines, some lyric effusions in metres more various, and some fables which have considerable merit; but his epigrams constitute his strongest claim to poetic celebrity, both for their causticity and condensation: they are however so occasional and so local in their application, that they can be thoroughly enjoyed only by the native German and the Göttingen resident.

Frederic William Zachariä is said to have been of jewish descent, and born at Frankenhausen, in 1726: he was sent however to study at Leipzig; and, like Kästner, acquired his early bent among the writers of the Saxon school. Eventually he became a tutor, and then a professor in the Carolinian college at Braunschweig, where he died in 1777: but his contiguity to Göttingen threw him often into the literary society of that place. His works were collected, and edited by his friend Eschenburg. They contain a flat translation into German hexameters of Milton's *Paradise Lost;* (2) The Creation of Hell in the manner of Klopstock; (3) a rimed translation of Pope's *Rape of the Lock;* this was more successful, and tempted the poet to imitate his model in three vapidly galant comic epopæas entitled, The Handkerchief, The Dandy, and The Phaeton; (4) an imitation of Thomson's *Seasons* in hexameter; (5) Fables, in the manner of Burkard Wallis, which are perhaps the most easy and pleasing of his compositions; and (6) Cortez, an epic poem, in iambic blank verse, on the conquest of Mexico; but this work the author did not live to complete; nor do the portions, which have appeared, although they

include picturesque descriptions, excite any strong regret at his want of rapidity or perseverance.

Let us pass on to a real genius.

LIFE OF GODFRED-AUGUSTUS BÜRGER.

The poet, says Bürger, in one of his prefaces, lays no claim, in the scale of being, to the rank of a sun; he is content with the humbler, harmless, welcome offices of Zephyr. Though he neither move the mills of manufacture, nor the ships of commerce, he may unfold the petals of the sweetest flowers, and incarnadine the flush of ripeness on the most delicious fruits; he may fan the brow of weary toil, or lap in elysian airs the strolling enthusiast of nature. Well may he expect then at his tomb the sigh of regret, the cypress-wreath of elegy, and the biographic memorial of posthumous admiration.

Godfred-Augustus was the second child and only son of the Lutheran minister John-Godfred Bürger, by his wife Gertrude-Elizabeth, whose maiden name was Bauer. He was born in 1748, on new year's day, at Wolmerswende, in the German principality of Halberstadt, and inherited with the indolence of his father the talents of his mother. His early progress was inconsiderable. At ten years of age he could barely read and write. But he had a good memory: he learned by heart, and repeated with ease, many of Luther's hymns, and other pious fragments. He read the bible with delight: the historical books, the prophets, the psalms, and especially the apocalypse, were turned over by him daily with renewed pleasure.

To these hymns of Luther he ascribed, in after-life, the hint of that impressive popularity which charac-

terized his ballads. He had always an ear for rhythm, and, while a boy, would indicate and blame the lines which had a half-foot too much, or which were so constructed as to throw on distinct syllables the ictus of the scanner and the emphasis of the reader. By a kind of instinct he knew already what interfered with effect.

He loved to stray alone about a wild uninclosed heath near his father's home. He was ordered to carry a Latin grammar in his pocket, and to learn his declensions. The first rudiments his mother attempted to teach him. He was next intrusted to the care of a neighbouring preacher; but so averse was he to this kind of application, that after two years he did not know his grammar, and was forced to withdraw as a dunce incapable of literary culture.

In 1760 his grandfather put him to a boarding-school at Aschersleben, under the rector Auerbach. Here young Bürger learned something, and exerted his talent for versification in a poem on the fire that happened in the spring of 1764 at Aschersleben, which advantageously displays both his metrical and pious turn of mind. An epigram on the usher's bag-wig, which the poet's school-fellows repeated with troublesome and seditious complacency, soon after occasioned his expulsion, as a ringleader in this petty insurrection against authority.

He was now sent to the university of Halle, to study theology. This was not the profession of his choice, but his choice of this profession was the condition of his grandfather's bounty. He accordingly went through the routine of instruction, and once preached in a village near Halle. But his acquaintance while at this college with a counsellor Klotze, a

man of literary attainments and free manners, brought on Bürger a reputation for libertinism, which, in the then state of Protestant Germany, was supposed incompatible with the pastoral office. Even his grandfather thought it necessary he should relinquish the holy profession for the study of the law, and accordingly consented to his removal, for that purpose, to Göttingen in the Easter term of 1768. To jurisprudence he applied with assiduity, and became well versed in the Pandects; but experience had taught him no discretion with respect to personal conduct. The lodgings which Klotze recommended he took at Göttingen, and again made a noise by his dissoluteness, which provoked his grandfather to withdraw all further patronage. Poor, and a rake, it was difficult not to incur a style of living repulsive to mere acquaintance, and disgusting even to the tolerance of friendship. Biester, Sprengel, and Boie, were among those friends who valued in Bürger the good qualities which still remained to him, and who conferred on his adversity what it admitted of consolation. For Biester he was conceived to feel; to Boie he was thought to owe predilection. A humorous poetical epistle to Sprengel, requiring back a great-coat left at his rooms, and the drinking song *Herr Bacchus ist ein braver Mann*, were then considered as indicating the natural line of pursuit for his literary talents. Pecuniary distress had made him sensible of the necessity of exertion; for the fear of want is a stronger stimulus than the hope of remote advancement.

It was now that he first read with ardor the ancient classics, and that he applied to the modern languages with assiduity. English, French, Italian, Spanish, all yielded to his efforts. With Bürger and his companions

Shakspeare became so favourite an author, that they agreed, one April night, to have a frolic in honor of his birth-day, at which all the conversation should be conducted in quotations from the English dramatist. Baron Kielmansegge was their host, and so glibly would his guests repeat with Sir Toby, "Art any thing but a steward? Dost thou think there shall be no more cakes and ale?" that by the hour of separation their turbulence drew the attention of the police, and they had to "rub their chain with crumbs." [Dass sie ihren Rausch auf dem Carcer ausschlafen müssten.] Bürger delighted also in Spanish literature, and composed in that language an original story, which Boie still possesses.

Gotter, a young man, formed by the study of French models to a love of correct and polished versification, came to Göttingen in 1769, and associated with Bürger and his friends. He had brought a Parisian Almanac of the Muses, and took pleasure in exhibiting those pencilled geraniums, with which the Gressets, the Dorats, and the Pezais, had stocked this annual anthology. To Gotter, Bürger attached himself greatly, and in his society certainly acquired considerable taste: in short, his natural tendency to the exorbitant, the extravagant, the eccentric, was somewhat pruned away. They planned in concert a German Almanac of the Muses. Kästner, the epigrammatist, promised them his assistance. Boie was alert in soliciting contributions, and obtained, in a trip to Berlin, the avowed patronage of the German Horace, Ramler, a friend the more important, as he had influence with the directories of periodical criticism. Under such auspices the Almanac of the Muses was not only likely to merit, but to obtain, speedy popularity. It accordingly suc-

ceeded to admiration, and continued from 1770 to 1775, under the same management, with yearly increasing repute. A translation of the *Hameau* of Bernard, and another more masterly of the *Pervigilium Veneris*, were among the exercitations which Bürger chronicled in the Muses' Almanac. The comic ballad Europa is also his, although the loose turn of the story occasioned him to suppress his usual signature.

Bürger envied, as he says in some of his letters, the correctness and ease of his friend Gotter's versification. To him all he produced was carried for criticism. It was at first sturdily defended against objections; but much was always altered eventually in deference to the judgment of the censor. Flushed with the glow of composition, Bürger would often present his verses with the comic entreaty, for this once not to find any fault; yet he was best pleased with a captious commentary, which put every epithet to the torture. Thus he gradually accomplished himself in the fine art *de faire difficilement des vers.*

Throughout life he maintained that his reputation as a poet was far less a result of any unusual talent in him, than of the perpetual use of the file; meaning by that, the extraordinary pains he bestowed on all his compositions: his best poems, he said, were precisely those which had cost him most labor. He would alter not merely words and lines, but left scarsely one vestige of his first composition.

In Germany it is not uncommon for polished families to bespeak a birth-day ode, an epithalamium, or an elegy, on those occasions which form a sort of epocha in the history of their existence. To the poet a pecuniary recompence is sent, and a splendid edition of his work is distributed among the friends of the

house. The notice which Bürger began to obtain occasioned many applications of this kind: and to him it was convenient, by means like these, to repair his shattered finances. Several heirs of fortune, several happy mothers, have now the pleasure of boasting, my birth-day was sung, or, my wedding was celebrated, by Bürger.

In 1771 Hölty, the elegiac, and Voss, the bucolic poet, Miller, author of Siegwart and Mariamne, a writer of great sensibility, and the two counts Stolberg, of whom Frederic Leopold is most known by poems, travels, and a republican romance called The Iland, came to Göttingen, as yet "youths unknown to fame." They were soon attracted, by the natural magnetism of genius, within the circle which had assembled round Bürger; and after his removal from Göttingen, in the following year, they continued to visit his rustic retreat.

The influence of Boie obtained for Bürger, in 1772, a stewardship of the manor of Alten-Gleichen, under the noble family of Uslar. The acceptance of the place occasioned a reconciliation between the poet and his grandfather, who was willing to encourage this symptom of economic care and returning prudence, by paying off the debts incurred at Göttingen by his grandson. Boie was absent. A less faithful friend undertook the liquidation; nearly seven hundred dollars of this advance passed into the hands, not of Bürger's creditors, but of a spendthrift associate. The student could not refund; the grandfather was inexorable; and Bürger migrated to his new residence, still encumbered with college-debts, which for years disturbed his repose, but which his sloth could never summons the means of discharging.

Here it was that Bürger first met with Herder's dissertation on the songs of rude nations, which drew his attention to the ballads of England, and with Percy's Reliques, which immediately became his manual. These books decided for ever the character of his excellence. From a free translation of "The Friar of Orders Gray" *(Bruder Graurock)*, and "The Child of Elle" *(Die Entführung)*, and from an imitation of Dryden's Guiscardo and Sigismunda *(Lenardo und Blandine)*, he rapidly passed on to the production of "The Wild Hunter," "The Parson's Daughter," and "Lenore." The two latter are probably the finest ballads extant. No other minstrel communicates to the reader an equal degree of interest and agitation; it is difficult to peruse them in the closet without breaking loose into pantomime. Nor is he less master of the more difficultly arousable, rapid, and impetuous movements of the soul, than of the tenderer feelings of the heart. His extraordinary powers of language are founded on a rejection of the conventional phraseology of regular poetry, in favor of popular forms of expression, caught by the listening artist from the voice of agitated nature. Imitative harmony he pursues almost to excess: the *onomatopœia* is his prevailing figure; the interjection his favourite part of speech: arrangement, rhythm, sound, rime, are always with him an echo to the sense. The hurrying vigor of his diction is unrivalled; yet is so natural, even in its sublimity, that his poetry is singularly fitted to become national popular song. The Lenore was first communicated to Boie, who eagerly induced several of the Göttingen party to ride with him to Alten Gleichen, and hear it. The effect was peculiarly great on the younger count Stolberg. During the stanza,

" Anon an iron-grated door
" Fast biggens on their view:
" He crack'd his whip—the locks, the bolts,
" Cling clang! asunder flew"—

Frederic Leopold started from his seat in an agony of rapturous terror.

Near two years were passed lonesomely by Bürger in his rural station, but they were the two years of his life the most valuable to the public. He married, in September 1774, a farmer's daughter of the neighbourhood, by name Niedeck, whose devoted, whose heroic attachment to him was never more conspicuous than in moments of the most untoward adversity. In the village Wollmershausen he hired the snug cottage to which he conducted his bride. An old schoolfellow, Goekingk, went to visit him there on his marriage, and renewed an intimacy which suffered no subsequent interruption.

Financial difficulties were probably the cause which, in 1776, aroused Bürger to publish in the German Museum, then a magazine of some celebrity, proposals for an Iambic version of the Iliad. The annexed specimens were distinguished for a more than Homeric rapidity of diction, and for an absence of stateliness, less unfaithful than the euphemism of Pope, and more attaching than the solemnity of Cowper. But as the younger count Stolberg had also made some progress in the same enterprise; as his specimens, more dexterously chosen, divided at least the suffrages of critics, and possessed the advantage of copying the hexametrical lines of the original; as his industry speedily outstripped the short fits of Bürger's application, and soon completed the publication of the Iliad; this

enterprise was abandoned without advantage to his fortune or his fame, after having extended beyond six books. The Epistle of Defiance, addressed on the occasion to Stolberg, is one of the most spirited of Bürger's smaller poems.

His next literary undertaking was a translation of Macbeth, brought out at Hamburg for the benefit of Schröder, an artist-actor who excelled in personating the heroes of Shakspeare. This translation, although too much abridged, and in the witch-scenes too low, is in some respects superior to the original. The character of Banquo has acquired more consequence, by the introduction of a good soliloquy at the beginning of the second act. Of the third act the third scene was omitted; the murder of Banquo is known from the narration of the assassin. In like manner the second scene of the fourth act is curtailed; the disgusting butchery of Macduff's child being far more pathetically stated by Rosse afterwards. The fourth scene of the fifth act is also with propriety omitted; as the removal of Birnam wood becomes sufficiently explained by the scout.

The father-in-law of Bürger died in 1777. In consequence of this event, an intricate and inconvenient executorship devolved on the poet. A law-suit, which it obliged him to conduct, displayed, indeed, his professional qualifications, but absorbed his leisure in vexatious frivolities. The inheritance, to which he acceded, did not much improve his circumstances; which an increasing family rendered daily more insufficient.

In 1778 he undertook the exclusive compilation of the Göttingen Almanac of the Muses (while Goekingk and Voss established a new one at Hamburg), and as-

sisted also in other periodical publications. The wages of authorship no where formed at that time an adequate resource, if a liberal maintenance was the object. There is, however, a pleasure in composition, there is a pleasure in praise, there is a pleasure, even when unknown, in contributing to tincture the general flow of opinion; these constituted the chief rewards, for, as a necessary division of human labor, it was certainly underpaid. Bürger found it so; and, in 1780, forsook the Muses for Pan, and applied to the Rural Gods for a maintenance refused him by the Nine. The farm he hired was situate in Appenrode. An additional motive for this determination was, perhaps, that the accounts of his stewardship had been negligently managed; and that something, very like a formal charge of peculation, was made against him to the lords of Uslar. This accusation, indeed, Bürger repelled; but his carelessness made his resignation a duty, and it was accepted with readiness.

In 1784 his wife died. His farm appeared unproductive, probably because it was abandoned to the management of servants; and he once more removed, with his children, to Göttingen, where he subsisted partly by writing, and partly by private tuition. He read lectures there on German style and the theory of taste; and after five years residence obtained a professorship.

As soon, or, perhaps, rather sooner than his circumstances properly permitted, he became united to his former wife's younger sister, the so often celebrated "Molly" of his love-songs. During her short stay with him she was the darling of his affections; but she died in child-bed of her first daughter, the very year in which she married. His children, after

this catastrophe, were dispersed among different kinsfolks.

Bürger undertook, in 1787, to lecture on the critical philosophy of Kant, and his course was much attended. In this year the jubilee of the foundation of the Göttingen university was celebrated: two poems were dedicated by him to the occasion, and the grateful college conferred, in return, a doctor's degree. In November 1789 he became professor of philosophy.

About this time an anonymous poem arrived from Stutgard, in which the authoress professed to have attached herself to Bürger, from the perusal of his heart-felt poems; and with a liberal zeal, by way of recompence, offered him her hand in marriage. The verses were well turned, and highly complimentary; and there was an interesting singularity in their heroic cast of sentiment. Bürger drew up a very galant reply, and printed both the poems in the Almanac of the Muses. Intimations now came in whispers, that the lines were intended for the individual, not for the public. Bürger set off for Stutgard. The syren pleased not only when she sang; and Bürger married her immediately.

It is melancholy to relate, that this truly poetical union afforded no lasting happiness to the husband; and that, in 1792, after little more than three years cohabitation, a separation was accomplished by application to a court of justice. During this unfortunate connexion Bürger was assailed with a deep hoarseness, which he never overcame, and which unfitted him for lecturing. This reduced him once more to dependence on the booksellers for subsistence. A pulmonary disease was, in the mean time, making a rapid progress; it affected his spirits less than his

health; but it snatched him, on the 8th of June 1794, from a country which he had illustrated, at the age of forty-six years and five months.

His physician Dr. Jäger, and his friend the benevolent Reinhard, the attendants of his last moments, accepted the care of his four surviving children. His property was found insufficient for the payment of his debts. A marble monument has been erected to his memory, by voluntary subscription, in a garden at Göttingen where he commonly walked. It is the work of the brothers Heyd of Cassel, and represents a Germania in tears crowning the poet's urn. The figure measures five feet, the pedestal two and a half.

His works consist of

Anthia and Abrokomas, translated from Xenophon of Ephesus.

Poems. Vol. I, 1778. Vol. II, 1789.

Macbeth, altered from Shakspeare.

Münchausen's Travels.

Miscellaneous Works, two volumes, containing the six first books of the Iliad, some prose versions from Ossian, and the papers inserted in various magazines, of which the philological (Hübnerus redivivus), and the political (Die Republic England), are calculated to excite some curiosity.

THE WILD HUNTER.

I.

His bugle horn the margrave sounds.
Halloo-loo-loo! to horse, to horse.
Neighs the brisk steed, and forward bounds;
The pack uncoupled join his course.
With bark and yelp, they brush and rush,
Thro' corn and thorn, thro' wood and bush.

II.

The Sunday morning's early ray
Had clad the lofty spire in gold;
And deep and shrill, with dong and ding,
The bells their matin chiming toll'd;
While from afar resounds the lay
Of pious people come to pray.

III.

Yolohee! dash athwart the train,
With trampling haste the margrave rides;
When lo! two horsemen speed amain,
To join the chase from different sides;
One from the right on milk-white steed,
The left bestrode a swarthy breed.

IV.

And who were then the stranger-pair?
I guess indeed, but may not say:
The right-hand horseman, young and fair,
Look'd blooming as the dawn of May;
The other's eyes with fury glow,
And tempests loured on his brow.

V.

"Be welcome, sirs, I 'm starting now;
You hit the nick of time and place;
Not earth or heaven can bestow
A princelier pleasure than the chase."
Giving his side a hearty slap;
He wav'd aloof his hunter's cap.

VI.

"Ill suits the bugle's boisterous noise
With sabbath-chime, and hymned prayer,
(Quoth the fair youth in gentle voice,)
To-day thy purpos'd sport forbear:
Let thy good angel warn thee now,
Nor to thy evil genius bow."

VII.

"Hunt on, my noble fellow, on,"
The dingy horseman briskly cries,
"Their psalms let lazy cowards con,
For us a gayer sun shall rise:
What best beseems a prince I teach,
Unheeded let yon stripling preach."

VIII.

"His ghostly counsels I shall scorn,"
The margrave said, and spurr'd his steed,
"Who fears to follow hound and horn,
Let him the paternoster heed.
If this, Sir Gentle, vexes you,
Pray join at church the saintly crew."

IX.

With sixteen antlers on his head
A milk-white stag before them strode.
Soho! hurrah! at once they sped
O'er hill and wood, o'er field and flood.
Aleft, aright, beside the knight,
Rode both the strangers black and white.

X.

Louder their bugle-horns they wind,
The horses swifter spurn the ground;
And now before, and now behind,
Crush'd, gasping, howls some trampled hound.
"There let him burst, and rot to hell,
Our princely sport this must not quell."

XI.

The quarry seeks a field of corn,
And hopes to find a shelter there.
See the poor husbandman forlorn
With clasped hands is drawing near.
"Have pity, noble Sir, forbear,
My little only harvest spare."

XII.

The right-hand stranger calls aside;
The other cheers him to the prey.
The margrave bawls with angry chide:
"Vile scoundrel, take thyself away."
Then cracks the lifted whip on high,
And cuts him cross the ear and eye.

XIII.

So said and done, o'er ditch and bank
The margrave gallops at a bound;
And with him pours in rear and flank
The train of man and horse and hound.
Horse, hound, and man, the corn-field scour,
Its dust and chaff the winds devour.

XIV.

Affrighted at the growing din
The timid stag resumes his flight,
Runs up and down, and out and in,
Until a meadow caught his sight,
Where, couch'd among the fleecy breed,
He slily hopes to hide his head.

XV.

But up and down, and out and in,
The hounds his tainted track pursue;
Again he hears the growing din,
Again the hunters cross his view.
The shepherd, for his charge afraid,
Before the margrave, kneeling, said:

XVI.

"In mercy, noble lord, keep back;
This is the common of the poor;
Unless you whistle off the pack,
We shall be starv'd for want of store.
These sheep our little cotters owe,
Here grazes many a widow's cow."

XVII.

The right-hand stranger calls aside;
The other cheers him to proceed.
Again the knight, with angry chide,
Repels the peasant's humble plead:
"Wert thou within thy cattle's skin,
I would not call a bloodhound in."

XVIII.

He sounds the bugle loo-loo-loo!
The dogs come yelping at the sound;
With fury fierce the eager crew
Pounce on whatever stood around.
The shepherd, mangled, blood-besmear'd,
Falls; and, beside him, all the herd.

XIX.

Rous'd by the murderous whoop so near
The stag once more his covert breaks;
Panting, in foam, with gushing tear,
The darkness of the wood he seeks,
And, where a lonely hermit dwells,
Takes refuge in the hallow'd cells.

XX.

With crack of whip, and blore of horn,
Yolohee! on! hurrah! soho!
Rash rush the throng thro' bush and thorn,
And thither still pursue the foe.
Before the door, in gentle guise,
His prayer the holy hermit tries.

XXI.

"Break off thy course, my voice attend,
Nor God's asylum dare profane;
To Heaven not in vain ascend
The groans of suffering beast or man.
For the last time be warn'd, and bow,
Else punishment shall seize thee now."

XXII.

The right-hand stranger pleads again,
With anxious mildness to forbear;
The left-hand horseman shouts amain,
And cheers the margrave still to dare.
In spite of the good angel's call,
He lets the evil one enthral.

XXIII.

" Perdition here, perdition there,"
He bellows, " I as nothing reck;
If God's own footstool were its lair,
The gates of Heaven should not check.
On, comrades, on!" he rode before,
And burst athwart the oriel door.

XXIV.

At once has vanisht all the rout,
Hermit, and hut, and stag, and hound;
Nor whip, nor horn, nor bark, nor shout,
Amid the dun abyss resound.
Dim chilly mists his sight appal;
A deadly stillness swallows all.

XXV.

The knight, affrighted, stares around;
He bawls, but tries in vain to hear;
He blows his horn, it yields no sound,
Cuts with his lash the silent air,
And spurs his steed on either side,
But from the spot he cannot ride.

XXVI.

Darker and darker grow the skies,
As were he shrouded in a grave:
And from afar below arise
Sounds as of ocean's restless wave:
While from on high, thro' clouds and gloom,
A voice of thunder speaks his doom:

XXVII.

" Thou fiend beneath a human shape,
Scorner of beast, of man—of God,
Know that no creature's groans escape
His ear, or his avenging rod.
Fly, and that princes long may heed,
Shall Hell and Devil dog thy speed."

XXVIII.

Cold shudders thrill through flesh and bone;
The voice his soul of hope bereaves;
A flash of tawny lightning shone
Upon the forest's rustling leaves;
And chilly winds begin to roar,
And showery tempests drift and pour.

XXIX.

Louder and louder howls the storm,
And from the ground, bow wow! soho!
A thousand hell-hounds, ghaunt of form,
Burst open-mouth'd—at him they go—
And there 's a ghastly hunter too,
Horsed on the steed of dingy hue—

XXX.

The margrave scuds o'er field and wood,
And shrieks to them in vain to spare;
Hell follows still through fire or flood,
By night, by day, in earth, in air.—
This is the chase the hunter sees,
With midnight horror, thro' the trees.

The spectre-hunt in Dryden's *Theodore and Honoria* has evidently suggested some of the imagery in this spirited ballad. Critics have objected, that the church-bells, and the congregation singing psalms as they approach (stanza II), and the religious scruple to a

hunting party on the sabbath-day (stanza VI), tend to place the scene in a protestant province; whereas the hermitage (stanza XIX) removes it to a catholic country. Sir Walter Scott, in his fine imitation of the poem, has wisely veiled an imperfection, which, as an historian, I have thought fit to retain.

THE PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

I.

Beside the parson's bower of yew,
  Why strays a troubled spright,
That peaks and pines, and dimly shines
  Through curtains of the night?

II.

Why steals along the pond of toads
  A gliding fire so blue,
That lights a spot, where grows no grass,
  Where falls no rain, nor dew?

III.

The parson's daughter once was good,
  And gentle as the dove,
And young, and fair—and many came
  To win the damsel's love.

IV.

High o'er the hamlet, from the hill,
  Beyond the winding stream,
The windows of a stately house,
  In sheen of evening gleam.

V.

There dwelt in riot, rout, and roar,
A lord so frank and free;
That oft, with inward joy of heart,
The maid beheld his glee:

VI.

Whether he met the dawning day
In hunting trim so fine;
Or tapers, sparkling from his hall,
Beshone the midnight wine.

VII.

He sent the maid his portrait, girt
With diamond, pearl, and gold;
And silken paper, sweet with musk,
This gentle message told:

VIII.

"Let go thy sweethearts one and all;
Shalt thou be basely wooed,
That worthy art to gain the heart
Of youths of noble blood?

IX.

"The tale I would to thee bewray,
In secret must be said;
At midnight hour I 'll seek thy bower;
Fair lass, be not afraid.

X.

"And when the amorous nightingale
Sings sweetly to his mate,
I 'll pipe my quail-call from the field;
Be kind, nor make me wait."

XI.

In cap and mantle clad he came,
At night, with lonely tread,
Unseen, and silent as a mist;
And hush'd the dogs with bread.

XII.

And when the amorous nightingale
Sang sweetly to his mate,
She heard his quail-call in the field;
And ah! ne'er made him wait.

XIII.

The words he whisper'd were so soft
They won her ear and heart;
How soon will she who loves believe:
How deep a lover's art!

XIV.

No lure, no soothing guise, he spar'd,
To banish virtuous shame;
He call'd on holy God above,
As witness to his flame:

XV.

He clasp'd her to his breast, and swore
To be for ever true;
"O yield thee to my wishful arms,
Thy choice thou shalt not rue."

XVI.

And while she strove, he drew her on,
And led her to the bower,
So still, so dim—and round about
Sweet smelt the beans in flower.

XVII.

There beat her heart, and heav'd her breast,
And pleaded every sense;
And there the glowing breath of lust
Extinguish'd innocence.

XVIII.

But when the fragrant beans began
Their fallow blooms to shed,
Her sparkling eyes their lustre lost,
Her cheek, its roses fled.

XIX.

And when she saw the pods increase,
The ruddier cherries stain,
She felt her silken robe grow tight,
Her waist new weight sustain.

XX.

And when the mowers went afield,
The yellow corn to ted,
She felt her burden stir within,
And shook with tender dread.

XXI.

And when the winds of autumn hist
Along the stubble-field,
Then could the damsel's piteous plight
No longer be conceal'd.

XXII.

Her sire, a harsh and angry man,
With furious voice revil'd;
" Hence from my sight! I 'll none of thee—
I harbour not thy child."

XXIII.

And fast, amid her fluttering hair,
With clenched fist he gripes,
And seiz'd a leathern thong, and lash'd
Her side with sounding stripes.

XXIV.

Her lily skin, so soft and white,
He ribb'd with bloody wales;
And thrust her out, though black the night,
Though sleet and storm assails.

XXV.

Up the harsh rock, on flinty paths,
The maiden had to roam;
On tottering feet she grop'd her way,
And sought her lover's home.

XXVI.

"A mother thou hast made of me,
Before thou mad'st a wife,
For this, upon my tender breast,
These livid stripes are rife:

XXVII.

"Behold!"—And then, with bitter sobs,
She sank upon the floor—
"Make good the evil thou hast wrought;
My injur'd name restore."

XXVIII.

"Poor soul! I 'll have thee hous'd and nurs'd,
Thy terrors I lament.
Stay here; we 'll have some further talk—
The old one shall repent—"

XXIX.

" I have no time to rest and wait;
That saves not my good name:
If thou with honest soul hast sworn,
O leave me not to shame.

XXX.

" But at the holy altar be
Our union sanctified;
Before the people, and the priest,
Receive me for thy bride."

XXXI.

" Unequal unions may not blot
The honors of my line:
Art thou of wealth, or rank, for me
To harbour thee as mine?

XXXII.

" What 's fit and fair I 'll do for thee;
Shalt yet remain my love—
Shalt wed my huntsman—and we 'll then
Our former transports prove."

XXXIII.

" Thy wicked soul, hard-hearted man,
May pangs in hell await!
Sure, if not suited for thy bride,
I was not for thy mate.

XXXIV.

" Go, seek a spouse of nobler blood,
Nor God's just judgments dread:
So shall, ere long, some base-born wretch
Defile thy marriage-bed.

XXXV.

" Then, traitor, feel how wretched they
In hopeless shame immerst;
Then smite thy forehead on the wall,
While horrid curses burst.

XXXVI.

" Roll thy dry eyes in wild despair—
Unsooth'd thy grinning woe:
Through thy pale temples fire the ball,
And sink to fiends below."

XXXVII.

Collected then, she started up,
And, through the hissing sleet,
Through thorn and briar, through flood and mire,
She fled with bloody feet.

XXXVIII.

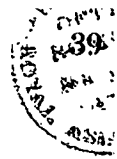
" Where now," she cried, " my gracious God,
What refuge have I left?"
And reach'd the garden of her home,
Of hope in man bereft.

XXXIX.

On hand and foot she feebly crawl'd
Beneath the bower unblest;
Where withering leaves, and gathering snow,
Prepar'd her only rest.

XL.

There rending pains, and darting throes,
Assail'd her shuddering frame;
And, from her womb, a lovely boy
With wail and weeping came.



XLI.

Forth from her hair a silver pin
With hasty hand she drew,
And prest against its tender heart,
And the sweet babe she slew.

XLII.

Erst when the act of blood was done,
Her soul its guilt abhorr'd:
" My Jesus! what has been my deed!
Have mercy on me, Lord!"

XLIII.

With bleeding nails, beside the pond,
Its shallow grave she tore:
" There rest in God; there shame and want
Thou canst not suffer more.

XLIV.

" Me vengeance waits. My poor, poor child,
Thy wound shall bleed afresh,
When ravens from the gallows tear
Thy mother's mouldering flesh."

XLV.

Hard by the bower her gibbet stands:
Her skull is still to shew;
It seems to eye the barren grave,
Three spans in length below.

XLVI.

That is the spot, where grows no grass,
Where falls no rain, nor dew;
Whence steals along the pond of toads
A hovering fire so blue.

XLVII.

And nightly, when the ravens come,
Her ghost is seen to glide,
Pursues, and tries to quench, the flame,
And pines the pool beside.

This truly pathetic ballad is said to have been suggested by a fact, which happened in the neighbourhood of Göttingen, and which inspired universal compassion. At that time child-murder was punished with death: a more lenient legislation is now content to pity the agonies of shame, and to notice merely the concealment of pregnancy. No doubt this poem has contributed to soften the ancient severity of the law; for the poet diffuses and perpetuates the feelings he excites, and thus guarantees the duration of the public opinion he insinuates.

ELLENORE.

I.

At break of day from frightful dreams
Upstarted Ellenore:
My William, art thou slayn, she sayde,
Or dost thou love no more?

II.

He went abroade with Richard's host
The paynim foes to quell;
But he no word to her had writt,
An he were sick or well.

III.

With blore of trump and thump of drum
His fellow-soldyers come,
Their helms bedeckt with oaken boughs,
They seeke their long'd-for home.

IV.

And evry road and evry lane
Was full of old and young
To gaze at the rejoycing band,
To haile with gladsom toung.

V.

"Thank God!" their wives and children sayde,
"Welcome!" the brides did saye;
But greet or kiss gave Ellenore
To none upon that daye.

VI.

And when the soldyers all were bye,
She tore her raven hair,
And cast herself upon the growne,
In furious despair.

VII.

Her mother ran and lyfte her up,
And clasped in her arm,
"My child, my child, what dost thou ail?
God shield thy life from harm!"

VIII.

'O mother, mother! William 's gone
What 's all besyde to me?
There is no mercie, sure, above!
All, all were spar'd but he!'

IX.

"Kneele downe, thy paternoster saye,
'T will calm thy troubled spright:
The Lord is wise, the Lord is good;
What He hath done is right."

X.

'O mother, mother! saye not so;
Most cruel is my fate:
I prayde, and prayde; but watte avaylde?
'T is now, alas! too late.'

XI.

"Our Heavenly Father, if we praye,
Will help a suffring child:
Go take the holy sacrament;
So shal thy grief grow mild."

XII.

'O mother, what I feele within,
No sacrament can staye;
No sacrament can teche the dead
To bear the sight of daye.'

XIII.

"May-be, among the heathen folk
Thy William false doth prove,
And put away his faith and troth,
And take another love.

XIV.

"Then wherefor sorrowe for his loss?
Thy moans are all in vain:
But when his soul and body parte,
His falsehode brings him pain."

XV.

'O mother, mother! gone is gone:
My hope is all forlorn;
The grave my only safeguard is—
O, had I ne'er been born!'

XVI.

'Go out, go out, my lamp of life;
In grizely darkness die:
There is no mercie, sure, above!
For ever let me lie.'

XVII.

"Almighty God! O do not judge
My poor unhappy child;
She knows not what her lips pronounce,
Her anguish makes her wild.

XVIII.

"My girl, forget thine earthly woe,
And think on God and bliss;
For so, at least, shal not thy soul
Its heavenly bridegroom miss."

XIX.

'O mother, mother! what is bliss,
And what the fiendis cell?
With him 't is heaven any where,
Without my William, hell.

XX.

'Go out, go out, my lamp of life,
In endless darkness die:
Without him I must loathe the earth,
Without him scorne the skie.'

XXI.

And so despair did rave and rage
Athwarte her boiling veins;
Against the Providence of God
She hurlde her impious strains.

XXII.

She bet her breast, and wrung her hands,
And rollde her tearless eye,
From rise of morn, til the pale stars
Again orespred the skye.

XXIII.

When harke! abroade she herde the tramp
Of nimble-hoofed steed;
She herde a knight with clank alighte,
And climbe the stair in speed.

XXIV.

And soon she herde a tinkling hand,
That twirled at the pin;
And thro her door, that opend not,
These words were breathed in.

XXV.

"What ho! what ho! thy door undo;
Art watching or asleepe?
My love, dost yet remember me,
And dost thou laugh or weepe?"

XXVI.

'Ah! William here so late at night!
Oh! I have wachte and wak'd:
Whense art thou come? For thy return
My heart has sorely ak'd.'

XXVII.

"At midnight only we may ride;
I come ore land and see:
I mounted late, but soone I go;
Aryse, and come with mee."

XXVIII.

'O William, enter first my bowre,
And give me one embrace:
The blasts athwarte the hawthorn hiss;
Awayte a little space.'

XXIX.

"Tho blasts athwarte the hawthorn hiss,
I may not harbour here;
My spurs are sett, my courser pawes,
My hour of flight is nere.

XXX.

"All as thou lyest upon thy couch,
Aryse, and mount behinde;
To-night we'le ride a thousand miles,
The bridal bed to finde."

XXXI.

'How, ride to night a thousand miles?
Thy love thou dost bemock:
Eleven is the stroke that still
Rings on within the clock.'

XXXII.

"Looke up; the moon is bright, and we
Outstride the earthly men:
I'le take thee to the bridal bed,
And night shal end but then."

XXXIII.

'And where is then thy house, and home,
And bridal bed so meet?'
"T is narrow, silent, chilly, low,
Six planks, one shrouding sheet."

XXXIV.

‘ And is there any room for me,
Wherein that I may creepe ?’
“ There ’s room enough for thee and me,
Wherein that we may sleepe.

XXXV.

“ All as thou lyest upon thy couch,
Aryse, no longer stop;
The wedding-guests thy coming wayte,
The chamber-door is ope.”

XXXVI.

All in her sarke, as there she lay,
Upon his horse she sprung;
And with her lily hands so pale
About her William clung.

XXXVII.

And hurry-skurry off they go,
Unheeding wet or dry;
And horse and rider snort and blow,
And sparkling pebbles fly.

XXXVIII.

How swift the flood, the mead, the wood,
Aright, aleft, are gone!
The bridges thunder as they pass,
But earthly sowne is none.

XXXIX.

Tramp, tramp, across the land they speede;
Splash, splash, across the see:
“ Hurrah! the dead can ride apace;
Dost feare to ride with mee ?

XL.

" The moon is bright, and blue the night;
Dost quake the blast to stem?
Dost shudder, mayd, to seeke the dead?"
' No, no, but what of them?'

XLI.

How glumly sownes yon dirgy song!
Night-ravens flappe the wing.
What knell doth slowly tolle ding dong?
The psalms of death who sing?

XLII.

Forth creepes a swarthy funeral train,
A corse is on the biere;
Like croke of todes from lonely moores,
The chauntings meete the eere.

XLIII.

"Go, beare her corse when midnight 's past,
With song, and tear, and wail;
I 've gott my wife, I take her home,
My hour of wedlock hail!

XLIV.

" Leade forth, o clark, the chaunting quire,
To swelle our spousal-song:
Come, preest, and reade the blessing soone;
For our dark bed we long."

XLV.

The bier is gon, the dirges hush;
His bidding all obaye,
And headlong rush thro briar and bush,
Beside his speedy waye.

XLVI.

Halloo! halloo! how swift they go,
Unheeding wet or dry;
And horse and rider snort and blow,
And sparkling pebbles fly.

XLVII.

How swift the hill, how swift the dale,
Aright, aleft, are gon!
By hedge and tree, by thorp and town,
They gallop, gallop on.

XLVIII.

Tramp, tramp, across the land they speede;
Splash, splash, across the see:
"Hurrah! the dead can ride apace;
Dost feare to ride with mee?

XLIX.

"Look up, look up, an airy crew
In roundel daunces reele:
The moon is bright, and blue the night,
Mayst dimly see them wheele.

L.

"Come to, come to, ye ghostly crew,
Come to, and follow me,
And daunce for us the wedding daunce,
When we in bed shal be."

LI.

And brush, brush, brush, the ghostly crew
Came wheeling ore their heads,
All rustling like the witherd leaves
That wide the whirlwind spreads.

LII.

Halloo! halloo! away they go,
Unheeding wet or dry;
And horse and rider snort and blow,
And sparkling pebbles fly.

LIII.

And all that in the moonshyne lay,
Behind them fled afar;
And backward scudded overhead
The skie and every star.

LIV.

Tramp, tramp, across the land they speede;
Splash, splash, across the see:
"Hurrah! the dead can ride apace;
Dost feare to ride with mee?

LV.

I weene the cock prepares to crowe;
The sand will soone be run:
I snuffe the early morning air;
Downe, downe! our work is done.

LVI.

The dead, the dead can ride apace:
Our wed-bed here is fit:
Our race is ridde, our journey ore,
Our endless union knit."

LVII.

And lo! an yron-grated gate
Soon biggens to their view:
He crackde his whyppe; the locks, the bolts,
Cling, clang! assunder flew.

LVIII.

They passe, and 't was on graves they trodde;
"'T is hither we are bound:"
And many a tombstone ghastly white
Lay in the moonshyne round.

LIX.

And when he from his steed alytte,
His armure, black as cinder,
Did moulder moulder all awaye,
As were it made of tinder.

LX.

His head became a naked scull;
Nor hair nor eyne had he:
His body grew a skeleton,
Whilome so blithe of ble.

LXI.

And at his dry and boney heel
No spur was left to bee;
And in his witherd hand you might
The scythe and hour-glass see.

LXII.

And lo! his steed did thin to smoke,
And charnel-fires outbreathe;
And pal'd, and bleachde, then vanishde quite
The mayd from underneathe.

LXIII.

And hollow howlings hung in air,
And shrekes from vaults arose:
Then knewe the mayd she might no more
Her living eyes unclose.

LXIV.

But onward to the judgment-seat,
Thro' mist and moonlight dreare,
The ghostly crew their flight persewe,
And hollowe in her eare:

LXV.

"Be patient; tho thyne herte should breke,
Arrayne not Heaven's decree;
Thou nowe art of thy bodie reft,
Thy soul forgiven bee!"

NOTES TO ELLENORE.

STANZA I. No German poem has been so repeatedly translated into English as Ellenore: eight different versions are lying on my table, and I have read others. It becomes not me to appretiate them: suffice it to observe that this was the earliest of them all, having been communicated to my friends in the year 1790, and mentioned in the preface to Dr. Aikin's poems, which appeared in 1791. It was first printed in the second number of the Monthly Magazine for 1796. The German title is Lenore, which is the vernacular form of Eleonora, a name here represented by Ellenore.

STANZA II. In the original the emperor and empress have made peace, which places the scene in southern Germany; and the army is returning home triumphant. By shifting the scene to England, and making William a soldier of Richard Lionheart, it became necessary, that the ghost of Ellenore, whom Death, in the form of her lover, conveys to William's grave, should cross the sea. Hence the splash! splash! of the XXXIX and other stanzas, of which there is no trace in the original; of the tramp! tramp! there is. I could not prevail on myself to efface these words, which have been gotten by heart, and which are quoted even in Don Juan; but I am aware that the translation is in some respects too free for a history of poetry; and it is too trailing, *(schleppend)* said one of my German correspondents, for the rapid character of the prototype.

STANZA V. The word *bride* in German signifies not only a newly-married woman, but any betrothed woman; and in this sense it is here employed.

STANZA XXIII. Here begins a marked resemblance to an obscure English ballad called the Suffolk miracle, which it may be curious to exhibit in comparison. A Collection of Old Ballads, corrected from the best and most ancient copies extant (the third edition), London, 1727, published by J. Roberts, Warwick-lane; 287 pages—is quoted more than once in Percy's Reliques. It contains 44 poems: among them occurs, p. 226, the following tale, which, it is thought, bears a considerable resemblance to Lenore, and must have suggested the first hint of the fable.

THE SUFFOLK MIRACLE:

Or a relation of a young man, who, a month after his death, appeared to his sweetheart, and carried her on horseback behind him for forty miles in two hours, and was never seen after but in his grave.

A wonder stranger ne'er was known,
Than what I now shall treat upon;
In Suffolk there did lately dwell
A farmer rich, and known full well;
He had a daughter, fair and bright,
On whom he plac'd his whole delight;
Her beauty was beyond compare,
She was both virtuous and fair.
There was a young man living by,
Who was so charmed with her eye,
That he could never be at rest,
He was by love so much possest;
He made address to her, and she
Did grant him love immediately.
But, when her father came to hear,
He parted her and her poor dear;
Forty miles distant was she sent,
Unto his brother, with intent
That she should there so long remain,
Till she should change her mind again.
Hereat this young man sadly griev'd,
But knew not how to be reliev'd;
He sigh'd and sobb'd continually,
That his true love he could not see,
She by no means cou'd to him send,
Who was her heart's espoused friend.
He sigh'd, he griev'd, but all in vain,
For she confin'd must still remain;
He mourn'd so much that doctor's art
Could give no ease unto his heart,
And was so strangely terrify'd,
That in short time for love he dy'd.
She that from him was sent away,
Knew nothing of his dying day,
But constant still she did remain,
And lov'd the dead, although in vain.
After he had in grave been laid
A month or more, unto the maid
He came in middle of the night,
Who gazed to see her heart's delight.
Her father's horse, which well she knew,
Her mother's hood and safeguard too,
He brought with him, to testify
Her parents order he came by;
Which, when her uncle understood,
He hop'd it would be for her good,
And gave consent to her straitway,
That with him she should come away.
When she was got her love behind,
They pass'd as swift as any wind,
That in two hours, or little more,
He brought her to her father's door:
But, as they did this great haste make,
He did complain his head did ake,
Her handkerchief she then took out,
And ty'd the same his head about:
And unto him she then did say,
Thou art as cold as any clay;
When we come home a fire we 'll have,
But little dream'd he went to grave.
Soon were they at her father's door,
And after she ne'er saw him more.
I 'll set the horse up, then he said,
And there he left the harmless maid.
She knock'd, and strait a man he cry'd,
Who 's there? 'T is I, she then reply'd;
Who wonder'd much her voice to hear,
And was possest with dread and fear.
Her father he did list, and then
He star'd like an affrighted man;
Down stairs he ran, and, when he see her,
Cry'd out, My child, how cam'st thou here?
Pray, sir, did you not send for me,
By such a messenger? cry'd she.
Which made his hair stand on his head,
As knowing well that he was dead.
Where is he then? to her he said.
He 's in the stable, quoth the maid.
Go in, said he, and go to bed,
We 'll see the horse well littered.
He star'd about, and there could he
No shape of any mankind see,
But found his horse all in a sweat,
Which made him in a dreadful fret;
His daughter he said nothing to,
Nor none else, tho' full well he knew,
That he was dead a month before,
For fear of grieving her full sore.
Her father to the father went
Of the deceas'd, with full intent
To tell him what his daughter said:
So both came back unto the maid.
They askt her, and she still did say,
'T was he that thus brought her away.
Which when they heard they were amaz'd,
And on each other strangely gaz'd.
A handkerchief, she said, she ty'd
About his head, and when they try'd,
The sexton they did speak unto,
That he the grave would then undo.
Affrighted then they did behold
His body turning into mould,
And, tho' he had a month been dead,
The kerchief was about his head;
This thing unto her then they told,
And the whole truth they did unfold.
She was thereat so terrify'd,
And grieved, that she quickly dy'd.

Part not true love, you rich men then,
But, if they be right honest men
Your daughters love, give them their way,
Nor force ofttimes their life's decay.

STANZA XXIV. The line, "That twirled at the pin;" is taken from Percy, not from Bürger: in the original, Death pulls the ringlet of a bell-string, and at the clinglingling! Ellenore awakes. This is better; but I could not render it to my satisfaction.

The minor poems of Bürger consist partly of love-and-wine songs, of epistles, and of elegiac and occasional sonnets and stanzas, many of which have been excellently translated into English by the Rev. M. Beresford, and printed in an anthology, which he published at Berlin; (2) partly of translations, among which the *Pervigilium Veneris* is much distinguished for grace and elegance; and (3) partly of original explosions of personal and peculiar feeling concerning passing events or books. Two or three of the last class follow.

PRO PATRIA MORI.

For virtue, freedom, human rights, to fall,
Beseems the brave: it is a Saviour's death.
Of heroes only the most pure of all
Thus with their heart's blood tinge the battle-heath.

And this proud death is seemliest in the man
Who for a kindred race, a country bleeds:
Three hundred Spartans form the shining van
Of those, whom fame in this high triumph leads.

Great is the death for a good prince incurr'd;
Who wields the sceptre with benignant hand:
Well may for him the noble bare his sword,
Falling he earns the blessings of a land.

Death for a parent, friend, or her we love,
If not so great, is beauteous to behold:
This the fine tumults of the heart approve;
It is the walk to death unbought of gold.

But for mere majesty to meet a wound—
Who holds that great or glorious, he mistakes:
That is the fury of the pamper'd hound,
Which envy, anger, or the whip, awakes.

And for a tyrant's sake to seek a jaunt
To hell—'s a death which only hell enjoys:
Where such a hero falls—a gibbet plant,
The murderer's trophy, and the plunderer's prize.

PROMETHEUS.

Scarse had Prometheus to the dark cold earth
Convey'd the source of light, and warmth, and life,
Olympian fire—when many an idle boy,
For warnings had been fruitless, burnt his fingers.
Lord! what an uproar the fond parents make,
Join'd by fat fools, and many a pious nurse!
Like frighten'd geese, priests hiss, and the police
Gobbles and struts, as a scar'd turkey-cock.
And shall we let them quench thee, heavenly light
Of free inquiry?—No. Blaze up aloft
And penetrate e'en into things of heaven.

THE MENAGERIE OF THE GODS.

Our lap-dogs and monkeys, our squirrels and cats,
Our parrots, canaries, and larks,
Have furnisht amusement to many old maids,
And once in a while to young sparks.

In heaven, where time passes heavily too,
When the gods have no subject to talk on,
Jove calls for an eagle, he keeps in a mew,
As an old English baron his falcon.

He lets it jump on to his sofa and chair,
And dip its crookt beak in his cup;
And laughs when it pinches young Ganymed's ear,
Or eats his ambrosia up.

Queen Juno, who fears from rough play a mishap,
Keeps peacocks with rainbowy tails;
And when she 's dispos'd to grudge Saturn his nap,
Their screaming or screeching ne'er fails.

Fair Venus most willingly coaxes the doves,
That coo, woo, and wed, on her wrist;
The sparrow, her chambermaid Aglae loves,
As often is fondled and kist.

Minerva, too proud to seem pleas'd with a trifle,
Professes to keep her old owl,
The crannies and chinks of Olympus to rifle;
For rats, mice, and vermin, to prowl.

Apollo, above stairs, a first-rate young blood,
Has a stud of four galloway ponies;
To gallop them bounding on heaven's high road,
A principal part of his fun is.

'T is fabled or known, he instructed a swan,
One spring, to outwhistle a blackbird,
Which sings the Castalian streamlet upon,
Like any Napolitan lack-beard.

Lyæus in India purchas'd a pair
Of tygers, delightfully pyball'd,
And drives them about at the speed of a hare,
With self-satisfaction unrivall'd.

At Pluto's black gate, in a kennel at rest,
A mastiff so grim has his station,
That fearful of reaching the fields of the blest,
Some ghosts have made choice of damnation.

But among all the animals, little and great,
That are foster'd and pamper'd above,
The ass, old Silenus selects for his mate,
Is that which most fondly I love.

So quiet, so steady, so guarded, and slow,
He bears no ill-will in his mind;
And nothing indecent, as far as I know,
Escapes him before or behind.

So fully content with himself and his lord,
He is us'd with good humor to take
Whatever the whims of the moment afford,
Be it drubbing, or raisins and cake.

He knows of himself ev'ry step of the way,
Both down to the cellar and back;
A qualification, I venture to say,
No butler of mine is to lack.

So largo his rump, so piano his pace,
'T is needless the rider to gird on;
Tho' fuddled the god, tho' uneven the ways,
He never gets rid of his burden.

An ass such as this all my wishes would fill;
O grant me, Silenus, one pray'r,
When thou art a-dying, and planning thy will,
Good father, do make me thy heir!

There must be in genius a something contagious; not that innate talent can be transferable; but there is a productive skill which may be communicated as

a knack; and there is an art of selecting the moral point of view best adapted for effect, the picturesque station of vision whence to survey the object under delineation, which can also be taught by the artist to those who have the opportunity of observing him; there is moreover in unrecognized superiority a tendency to provoke competitory exertion, and these combats of the mind, if they gradually settle the relative rank of the athlets, have at least occasioned effusions, many of which retain an enduring vitality. How else can it be explained that so many individuals as remain to be enumerated in this groop should all have caught so high a degree of impressive power as still to live in the literature of their country; and yet all were inoculated from the strong arm of Bürger? It is time to pass on to his companions.

§ 3.

Life of J. H. Voss—Reviewal of his chief works—Eclogues —Devil in Ban—Luise—Odes and Songs—Translations of Homer and other ancients.

John Henry Voss was born 20th of February, 1751, at Sommersdorf, and sent for education to Penzlin in the duchy of Meklenburg, where he was well grounded in the latin language. Greek and hebrew he undertook for himself, without the assistance of a master. About the age of fifteen he was admitted into the free school of New-Brandenburg, where he had to earn his own clothing; his father having been reduced by the events of the seven years' war to a state of complete destitution. This he accomplished by giving private lessons. He formed a greek club among his fellow-students, in which every one of the twelve members officiated in turn as tutor; and thus the knowledge of each soon became common to all. Fines were imposed on the sluggard, or the blunderer; and these were employed in the purchase of the necessary books.

The works of Klopstock, and of Ramler, were acquired by this society, and early engaged the attention of Voss. His own first attempts at versification were made in hexameter: progressively he varied his metrical experiments, acquired a command of rime, and composed some eclogues both in low and high dutch,

which he inserted for a modest remuneration in the periodic miscellanies of the time. In 1770 he contributed to the Göttingen Almanac of the Muses.

A desire of studying at some German university was strong in Voss; but as his family could not supply him with the means, he went as private preceptor into some nobleman's family, and endeavoured by a rigid economy to provide the necessary resources. After his engagement at the castle was expired, he ventured in 1772 to Göttingen. The Germans every where are kind to poor scholars, and do not treat it as derogatory in them occasionally to ask charity. If, as often happens during the vacation, a small party of students undertake a pedestrian tour to botanize beside the lakes, or to geologize around the health-wells, of Germany, the gentlemen tourists, or invalids, who happen to be staying on the spot, take a pleasure in franking these collegians at the ordinary, or in contributing to replenish their common purse.

Heyne, the celebrated editor of Virgil and Homer, permitted Voss to attend his lectures gratis. So did other professors. There was a *philological Seminary* at Göttingen, intended to prepare young men for the office of ushers and schoolmasters in the Hanoverian territory. Heyne obtained for Voss a situation in this academy. Boie, the friend of Bürger, also patronized the rising talent of Voss, and procured for him during two years a gratuitous place at one of those public tables, which have been founded for the use of necessitous students.

Voss was not sufficiently deferential to the established reputation, nor sufficiently grateful for the experienced patronage, of Heyne. However necessary it might be for the literary candidate to exert his pen,

however convenient to display his knowledge of those topics on which Heyne lectured; yet urbanity was clearly due to his teacher and his patron. But Voss attacked the opinions of Heyne with the coarseness of low-breeding, and in great part with the very arguments which Heyne was accustomed to produce and to refute in his own lectures. Lichtenberg undertook the defense of the professor, and reproached to the rude polemic his ingratitude in plundering the substance of a series of instruction, which he had been permitted to attend gratuitously. Stung by this merited reproof, Voss borrowed four gold Frederics, which was the admission-fee to the course, and sent them to Heyne; who presented the money to a charitable institution for lying-in women. All this contributed to render the breach between these two eminent scholars irreparable; and Voss was coolly removed from the *Philological Seminary*, which would have prepared for him Hanoverian patronage.

A society of young men had been formed under the designation of "The Göttingen Friends," to which Bürger, Boie, the two Stolbergs, Hölty, Miller, Kramer, Leisewitz, Halm, and others successively belonged. Voss was admitted into this genial club, which furnished the materials for the Almanac of the Muses, and expended the profits of the undertaking in jovial entertainments. Klopstock himself came to pass a short time at Göttingen, and was admitted a member. But as this society acquired a character for libertinism, though tolerated, it was not countenanced by the graver heads of the university. A story circulates in French literature, that the author of the *Pucelle*, the author of the *Chandelle d'Arras*, and Piron, were once supping together, and defied each other to produce the

most obscene poem. Piron, to the surprize of the party, won the prize by an *Ode à Priape*, which is still remembered in the French army. A similar wager has been attributed to three of the Göttingen friends, Bürger, Frederic Leopold, and Voss; and as the German biographers relate this tradition in the life of Voss, it is suspectable that he was the successful competitor, and must bear his blushing honors. Let us rather hope this levity is but a hoax, or a rumor; certainly no such poem occurs in the Collective Works of Voss.

In 1775 he undertook the editorship of the Almanac of the Muses, under the new title of Annual Anthology *(Blumenlese)*. The place of publication was shifted to Hamburg; and it continued to succeed until 1800. During a visit to his new publishers, Voss became acquainted with Claudius at Wandsbeck; and took lodgings there for some time, as an indisposition, under which he laboured, was thought to require country-air. Meanwhile he was an active contributor to the *Deutsches Museum*, a periodic miscellany of eminence, and displayed with increasing success his philological learning, his critical acuteness, his skill as a classical translator, and his various resources as a poet.

In 1778 he became rector of the college at Ottendorf, in the Hanoverian territory, and married the sister of Boie. Ease, matrimony, and professional employment, soon reclaimed what there had been of explosiveness in his juvenile temper and conduct. He became sedately sedentary, and undertook that fac-simile translation of the Odyssey, which remains the most perfect imitation of the Homeric original, that any modern language has produced. The Greek has been rendered almost every where line for line: and with a fidelity

and an imitative harmony so admirable, that it suggests to the scholar the original wording, and reflects, as from a mirror, every beauty and every blemish of the ancient poem. A learned commentary mythologic and geographic was to have accompanied the version, and specimens of the intended annotations were given in the *Deutsches Museum;* but as these speculations were contested by Heyne, and tended to render the work inconveniently voluminous, the Odyssey was printed eventually without them in 1781.

Soon after, he translated the Arabian Nights from the French of Galland; a bookseller's job, which brought more profit than praise.

From Ottendorf Voss removed in 1782 to Eutin; where he also conducted a more considerable grammar-school. Immediately on his arrival, he edited a recently discovered *Hymn to Ceres,* which he provided with a latin interpretation, and which he also translated into German. At Eutin, Voss dwelt quietly for twenty-three years; assiduously superintending a large school, and yet finding leisure to render frequent services to german and to classical literature. He translated beautifully the Georgics of Virgil, and accompanied the publication with a dissertation on the Tone and Interpretation *(Ueber Virgil's Ton und Auslegung* 1791) of the latin poet. A splendid edition of this excellent translation has lately been made in London, accompanied with an English, a French, an Italian, and a Spanish version of the same poem.

Voss also translated from Horace, Tibullus, Ovid, and Aratus; and again from Hesiod, from the Argonautics, from Theocritus, Bion and Moschus, and, but with least success, from Aristophanes.

He is said also to have assisted his sons in their

translation of Shakspeare; but it is likely that the paternal mantle was extended in this instance, and perhaps in some others, over works executed by his pupils.

In 1805 Voss relinquished school-keeping, having been invited by the Grand Duke of Baden to occupy the chair of classical professor at the University of Heidelberg, which he filled many years with high celebrity. A pension from the Duke of Oldenburg was given to his long services at Eutin, and Voss passed his latter days in considerable comfort, and even affluence. He had the misfortune in 1822 to lose his eldest son, professor Henry Voss, the translator of Æschylus; and yielded himself to an attack of apoplexy in March, 1826.

Translation is an expedient exercise of rising talent; it guards against the triviality of copying domestic models, and is often the school in which a young author learns to form a style of his own. It provides the pleasures of competition without its envies, and stimulates the exertions of rivality without hazarding its disappointments. The imitation of a foreign work of art of acknowledged excellence best prepares the habit of analogous original composition: by rendering into English Ovid's *Sappho to Phaon* Pope learned to write his epistle of *Eloisa to Abelard*; and by translating from the greek many idyls of Theocritus, Voss acquired the skill to endite his German eclogues: although these versions did not appear in print so early as the poems, which they may be thought to have suggested.

Vossen's (this is the German genitive) Eclogues are

much finer than the earlier attempts of Gesner in this form of poetry. The second and third of them entitled: "The Serfs" and "The Emancipated" are pathetic and picturesque: they paint the miseries of vassalage, and the blessings of freedom, with a truth of nature, a fidelity to German manners, notions, and costume, truly admirable. Still the influence of Bürger's Wild Hunter over the imagination of the writer is conspicuous in the first of them.

A more singular and original Idyl is the twelvth, which follows.

THE DEVIL IN BAN.

LURIAN.

Slower, my goat, no panting; we shall reach
The Bloxberg[1] soon enough. By the seven stars
It yet must want an hour and more of midnight.
Fly higher, fool! already twice you 've singed
Your beard with shooting stars; and 't is so damp
Here o'er the desart shores of the red sea,
That from my shaggy hide and both my horns
The dew-drops drizzle. Hark! what howls below?

PUCK.

Boohoo!

LURIAN.

That voice is for an owl's too loud,
But too low for a devil's, sure—

PUCK.

Boohoo!

[1] Bloxberg is a mountain where witches hold their sabbath.

LURIAN.

What, my heart's brother, Puck? You look, poor fellow,
Like Belzebub's own grand-mother laid ableaching
In fumes of brimstone and vulcanic rays.
One almost hears within your shrivell'd skin
The dry bones clatter. Who could wedge your tail
Into the palm-tree so?

PUCK.

The Bristol parsons,[2]
Dabs at exorcism, who might shame Tobias—
But what 's your name?

LURIAN.

What, know you not poor Lurian,
Full in whose face fierce Luther flung his ink-stand?
Hence this pitch-plaster covers my left eye.

PUCK.

Lurian, meseems once else you got a scar.
While yet the pope rul'd undisturb'd at Rome,
Satan sent us together to that blacksmith,
Who on his wall had drawn the arch-devil's picture,
And us'd to pince at it with glowing tongs.
We knock'd, and ask'd for house-room; but the christian
Held on the key-hole a becross'd, beblest,
Besprinkled bag of holy sackcloth, given him
By Saint Nepomucene, and caught us in it;
Then flung us on his anvil, and with hammer,
Swingeingly heavy, so belabour'd us,
That had we not dwindled ourselves to fleas,
And hopp'd about the creases of the sack,
He must have done for us. When he untied
His poke, I got away; but you, poor Lurian!
He caught by the tail, and held against his grindstone,
Till you had sworn not to come near him more.

2 In the original, Pater Gassner, of similar celebrity: this translation was made about 1798 when an exorcism by priests of the Anglican church had been exhibited at Bristol; as recently at Bordeaux by the Jesuits.

You limp'd and jiffled for a long while after;
And when old Death met the bowed, hobbling, imp,
He 'd lift your tail, and grinning ask—" How goes it?"

LURIAN.

Sad is the memory of those evil days,
While with the keys of heaven and of hell
The pope did as he pleas'd. It was provoking,
Even to a devil, to see those orthodox
Jump into heaven for aping monks' grimaces,
While worthy heathens, and bold heretics,
Shower'd into hell by scores! It is no wonder
Some honest merry imp should slink, at times,
Far from the eternal fires, and howl of souls,
To make a pother in the pious world
By noises, ghostly hauntings, and possessions.
But since, at length, an angel of the light
Flung into the abyss the keys, and by degrees
Th' eternal bonfires slacken—all 's so still,
That e'en the priests grow doubtful if we are living.

PUCK.

Whose tail 's in a cleft-stick has no such doubt.
Feebly, indeed, but still the pope bears sway;
And would-be popelings, arm'd with Birmingham keys,
Yet rouse us from the dead repose we seek.
But tell me, friend, how comes this double chin?
You look as sleek as any stabled stallion,
With eyelets, by the fat flesh squeez'd together;
You seem half-brother to some rosy dean.

LURIAN.

No marvel! from a girl, who was possess'd,
An Abyssinian bishop drove me: hence
Came our acquaintance first, and next our friendship.
And now I dwell the cloister,[3] sweep the ailes,
Cover the kitchen embers, and at night

[3] At Diarbekr, Niebuhr heard a similar story.

Shut up the cells of monks. For this, their care
Feeds me at noon, and lets me steal at eve
Down to the cellar with them. What 's that nose for?

PUCK.

Lurian, my faithful friend, these forty days
I 've only tasted grasshoppers and honey,
A starveling lizard, and some scorpions:
I should have caught an ague on these sands,
Did not a simoom cheer me now and then.

LURIAN.

Poor fiend! we 'll see what fare the butler's foresight
Has skewer'd into my knapsack. When thou art cheer'd,
I 'll try to rid thee of this blessed spell.
The Bristol parsons can't have got a saintship
Home from Sienna yet.

PUCK.

No fear of that.

LURIAN.

Taste, hungred, first, this spitchcock'd rattle-snake,
And toasted toad, with assa-fœtida.
Lo! how his long ears wag! The devil is pleas'd,
His nostrils whiffle—shine his greedy eyes.
Here—here 's an otter's pluck—an owlet's wing,
Dog's tongues; with newts-eye sauce, and spawn of frog.
What will you drink?—tobacco-oil, or gin?

PUCK.

O this is dainty diet!—My wrinkled belly
Grows plump and smooth, and sounds like a brac'd drum.
Were but my tail set free—I too would go
Into a monastery.

LURIAN.

I 'll snap your spell.
This book I stole from my old Coptic bishop:

'T is full of Pharao-writing, and contains
Words that break every charm but those of saints.
O! that this ink had never reach'd my eyes!
Even the right is weak. Stroke back my hair,
That the brisk sparks may light me as I read.
"*Ahirom! Tuki! Zakarush! Misraim!*"
(You scratch like a tom-cat—pull in your claws).
"*Abracadabra! Kirlekamatsh! Woil!*"

PUCK.

Hurrah!—Live dance, and frolic!—Puck is free!
My friend, let me embrace thee!—One more hug!
Now at the witches' sabbath may attend
Long-absent I—rewhirl the airy reel,
Under each arm a doxy—join their hurly,
Till mouth and nostrils snort the flames of glee.

LURIAN.

How like a sucking-lamb the old boy wriggles
His tail for gladness! Scramble up behind,
Puck, on my goat. Your shrivell'd leathern wings
Are for our thousand miles of flight too feeble.
Cling close, and clasp below the cloven feet.
Now, goat, aloof!—whizz thro' the air to Bloxberg.

Luise is a rural epopœa of simple structure, and is divided into three cantoes, or idyls, as they are here called, which relate the betrothment and marriage of the heroine. It is composed in hexameter verse; and the charm of the narrative chiefly consists in the minute description of the local domestic manners of the personages.

The scene is laid in the village of Grünau, where the most conspicuous of the stationary residents are the pastor and his wife, and their only daughter Luise. A dowager countess inhabits the hall during the summer months only: her family consists of a grown up

daughter Amelia, the friend of Luise, of a younger son, who is about to be sent to the university, and of this son's preceptor, a young lutheran minister named Walter, for whom the countess has procured a neighbouring benefice, in consequence of his services to the family being no longer needed.

Walter has seen Luise at the table of the countess, at church, and elsewhere, and has applied, probably through the countess, to the parents of Luise, for permission to make an offer of marriage to the daughter. The father and mother and Luise are all content with the match; and an invitation has been sent to Walter, to come and pass, at the parsonage-house, Luise's eighteenth birth-day.

With this important morning the poem opens: the plan for passing the day is discussed in the domestic circle; and it is determined to go and take coffee in the open air, on the banks of the neighbouring lake, and, after rowing on the water to the principal points of view, to return and dine at home. Walter arrives, is received with welcome: it is agreed he shall escort Luise by land to the place of breakfast. The old people send to borrow a boat, and having packed up the necessary prog, embark with it to meet the lovers. The preparations for this breakfast will give an idea of the turn of the poem.

Wandering thus through blue flax-fields and by acres of barley,
Both on the hill-top paus'd, which commands such a view of the whole lake
Crisp'd with the lenient breath of the zephyr, and sparkling in sunshine;
Fair were the forests beyond of the white-bark'd birch, and the fir-tree,
Lovely the village at foot half-hid by the wood.—Then Louisa
Listening observ'd: Do I hear from afar oars dashing? Again now.—
Meanwhile Charles, who had run off before them, impatiently came back,
Shouting in glee: Make haste, or the boat will be ready before us:
But for the reeds you would see it, I saw it the while I was yonder.
Wing'd were the steps they now took; winds blowing the robes of the maiden

Close to her well-shap'd limbs, and dishevelling curls on her shoulders.
Now from the stern of the boat the pastor descried them, and call'd out:
Decently, children, and softly; you run like the fowls in the court-yard,
When cook flings them some crumbs, or a handful of barley or oatmeal.
Cautiously, daughter, you 'll stumble else over the roots of the bushes.
Breathless they halted awhile, and the boat lay dabbling before them,
Resting the keel of her prow on the pebbles that garnish'd the lake-shore.
Walter had fetch'd them a flat stone, placing it firm in the water,
So they could land dry-shod, and he offer'd his hand to the pastor,
Next to the good old lady, and both got safe on the meadow:
Baskets were landed the last, which the boatswain handed to Walter.
Lovely Louisa had welcom'd her parents, and shown them a green mound,
Under an old beech-tree, where the prospect was very inviting—
There we propose, said she, to unpack, and to spread out the breakfast;
Then we 'll adjourn to the boat, and be row'd for a time on the waters.
Quick then, and strike us a light! so rejoin'd the affectionate pastor,
I shall be smoaking a pipe, while you are preparing the coffee.
Then to the boatswain whisper'd the notable wife of the pastor:
John, first fasten the boat; strike light, and do make us a brisk fire
So that the smoak may be wafted away from the spot we shall sit on,
Under the family-beech, where the names of my children are graven.
Pick us up sticks, you young ones, and bring us some wisps of the reed-straw:
Proverbs remark that the angler must not fight shy of the water.
Now had the servant with flint struck glittering sparks from the bright steel,
Mushroom-tinder receiv'd them hissing; he lighted a match next,
Holding the straw to the flame, and it caught, reek'd, blaz'd, in an instant.
Sticks, twigs, heap'd on the fire, and resinous cones of the fir-tree
Crackled and torch'd, and scudded the smoak in the air-stream.
Just where the wind blew into the fire was station'd the trivet,
On it the well-clos'd kettle, replenish'd with crystalline water.
Meanwhile carried Louisa his pipe to papa, and tobacco
Wrapt in the velvety hide of the seal, and a paper for pipe-light:
Calmly the old man sat, and he whiff'd, and he smil'd, and again whiff'd.
Soon as the flame had surrounded the kettle, and steam from the lid burst,
Out of a paper-envelope the good old lady her coffee
Into the brown jug shower'd, and added some shavings of hartshorn,
Then with the boiling water she fill'd up the pot to the summit.
Kneeling she waver'd it over the fire, and watch'd for its clearing:
Hasten, my daughter, she said, to arrange all the cups in their places,
Coffee is soonly enough, and our friends will excuse it unfilter'd.
Quickly Louisa uplifted the lid of the basket, and took out
Cups of an earthen ware, and a pewter basin of sugar,
But when all had been emptied, the butter, the rolls, and the cold ham,
Strawberries, radishes, milk, and the cowslip-wine for the pastor,
Archly Louisa observ'd: Mamma has forgotten the tea-spoons!
They laugh'd; also the father; the good old lady she laugh'd too—
Echo laugh'd; and the mountains repeated the wandering laughter.
Walter presently ran to the birch-tree beside them, and cut off
Short smooth sticks with his clasp-knife, offering skewers for stirrers.

This specimen is not a strictly verbal translation, such as Voss himself was wont to execute; some lines having been skipped, which appeared trailing or superfluous, and some few having been a little transplanted. It gives however a faithful notion of the spirit of the piece, which may be compared with those works of the Flemish painters, in which a housewife, surrounded by kitchen furniture, forms the main object, and in which all the minute articles for domestic use are as elaborately painted as the human individuals.

In the second idyl the countess and Amelia call at the parsonage house, and gently hint that they hope the wedding-day will be fixed prior to their leaving the country for a city-residence. The intimation is received with deference, and they are invited to the wedding.

In the third idyl the wedding-day has dawned. The dress of Luise, and other preparations are described with profuse detail. The bridegroom arrives with a young friend, a college fellow-student who is lodged at the hall; he is perhaps a barrister who keeps the manorial courts of the countess. She and her daughter Amelia arrive next, bringing presents. Amelia has a new cassock for the bridegroom; and the countess some articles of dress for Luise. To the dinner all the neighbourhood have contributed: the game-keeper has sent venison, the villagers fish, Walter and his friend have killed pheasants and a hare; and the parsonage-house has furnished ham, poultry, and fruit. In the dessert, a posset milked under the cow is conspicuous, which, after being tasted in the parlour, is sent to regale the kitchen. After dinner the marriage ceremony is performed by the old pastor in his own

parlour, and in the presence of his guests: the comic consequentiality with which he pronounces the couple to be legally married deserves transcription.

> Were it arraigned by the voice of the General Superintendent;
> General Superintendent, I 'd answer, the marriage is valid.

Sandwiches succeed and music; and the clerk of the parish has also assembled a band without doors to honour the occasion. Presently the countess's carriage arrives; the party disperses: the bridegroom leads Luise to her chamber: and the holy curtain falls.

The Odes, Songs, Elegies, and Epigrams, of Voss may deserve perusal, praise, and preservation; in general they breathe a love of liberality, and a mania for music; but they exhibit few of those startling singularities, or glowing beauties, which would render a commentary amusing. The Allegro and Penseroso of Milton occur among his imitations of English writers; and there are epigrams on Pope's Homer not very flattering. His own version of the Greek poet pursues quite another idea of perfection, and, without any effort at an habitual stateliness of diction, copies his original with learned precision, with scrupulous fidelity, and with that natural colouring of style, which has placed his Iliad and his Odyssey high among the classical poems of the Germans, and at the head of all modern interpretations of the father of poetry. To give some idea of the effect of a Homer in hexameter, a short passage shall be copied from each epopœa.

ILIAD IX, 308.

> Hear, high-born Laertes's son, most ingenious pleader.
> Frankly to tell you my mind, and the course I intend to persist in,
> Suits; that ye may n't buz round me, assailing with troublesome prayers.
> Hateful to me, as the gates of the tomb, is the double-fac'd cringer,

Who one mind hides sly in his breast, and expresses another.
I speak out: and I fancy that not Agamemnon in person,
Nor any other Achaian, could move me. Unwelcome his fortune
Who has been dragg'd among hostile men, and has always to struggle,
Where but an even allotment awaits who lingers or combats.
Equally honor is shown to the coward as shown to the brave man.
Hades as well may surprise the repose as the toil of the hero.
Nothing is thrust upon me, but the sorrows of mind I have suffer'd;
Though I always have given my whole soul into the battle.
Like to a bird, who bestows on her callowy nestlings the morsel,
Which she weary and hungry requires, I too have been passing
Sleepless the night, and in bloody exertion the daylight,
All for their bedmates.

ODYSSEY XI, 593.

Sisyphus also I saw, with unwelcomest taskage tormented,
Toilsomely hoisting aloof, unassisted, a ponderous round stone.
Straining he labour'd amain with his feet, and his hands, and his shoulders,
Uphill trying to roll it away from the meadow. He wanted
Quite on the summit to place it at rest; but in vain: for
Sudden, with long loud sound down thunder'd the treacherous marble
Bounding; anew he begins the unprofiting effort: the thick sweat
Gush'd from his faultering limbs, and the dust had disfigur'd his visage.

Voss has written much concerning Homer, and has learnedly commented his mythology, his geography, and his other acquirements; but there is one clue to his local habitation and his name, which has been overlooked by the German commentator, and which it may be instructive to bring under notice.

The earliest writer who cites Homer, is Herodotus; Hesiod did not know Homer's poems. The earliest writer, who cites that Life of Homer which is ascribed to Herodotus, is Clemens Alexandrinus: Plato did not know that Life. Of course Homer flourished between Hesiod and Herodotus; and his biographer, between Plato and Clemens.

This biography, then, is an Alexandrian forgery in the name of Herodotus: and it is so glaringly a book-

seller's speculation, that all the poems uttered at Alexandria in Homer's name, such as the Batrachomyomachia, are officiously quoted in it; and anecdotes are contrived to account for their having been written. All these anecdotes, connected with the advertisement of surreptitious poems, are to be received with peculiar mistrust.

From Homer's writings, and especially from the Odyssey, it is clear, that he had travelled much about the Archipelago, particularly by sea. Still in the description of the Spartan territory (see the 581st, and following verses, of the second book of the Iliad,) one may discern a precision of topography, characteristic of local residence. Sparta was eminent at a more early period than Athens; Lycurgus long preceded Solon. Hence Sparta had, in some degree, acquired the lead, or sway, in Greece, before the Athenians were at all competitors for it. The Spartan language was termed Greek; and the Attic, or Ionic, or Doric, was insulted with the humiliating name of a dialect. This earlier civilization of Sparta renders it naturally probable, that Homer may have flourished there; and, as he chose a national theme, the rape of Helen, wife of the king of Sparta, it is the more evident that he kept in view a Lacedæmonian audience. The kings of Sparta, according to Pausanias (lib. III), derived their pedigree from the son of Agamemnon, and their inheritance from the daughters of Tyndarus.

Now let us turn to a remarkable passage in Plutarch's Biography of Lycurgus, which well deserves to be transcribed at length, on account of the reflections which it is adapted to excite in a speculative mind. "Among the friends gained by Lycurgus in Crete, was Thales, whom he could induce to go and settle

in Sparta. Thales was famed for wisdom and political ability. He was also a bard, who, under color of exercising his art, performed as great things as the most excellent lawgivers: for his songs were so many persuasives to obedience and unanimity,—and as by means of melody and number they had great grace and power,—they softened insensibly the manners of the auditors, drew them off from the animosities which then prevailed, and united them in zeal for excellence and virtue. From Crete, Lycurgus passed into Anatolia; where, apparently, he met with Homer's poems, which were preserved by the posterity of Cleophylus. Observing that many moral sentences, and much political knowledge, were intermixed with that poet's stories, which had an irresistible charm, he collected them into one body. He transcribed them with pleasure, in order to take them home with him: for this glorious poetry was not yet fully known in Greece; only some particular pieces were in a few hands, as they happened to be dispersed. Lycurgus was the first who made them collectively known."

So far Plutarch. Now, when the high panegyric is observed, which is here bestowed on the poetry of Thales, who is said to have performed as great things as the most celebrated lawgivers; when it is recollected that this Thales was the personal friend of Lycurgus, and accompanied him from Crete to the plain of Troy, and from the plain of Troy to Sparta; when it is recollected that Lycurgus was so anxious an enthusiast of poetry, as to have collected and edited poems which remain to us;—it is plainly impossible that the poems of Thales can have totally perished. Lycurgus would not have neglected the reputation of such a friend.

Consequently, the poems collected by Lycurgus, and edited by him, are those of Thales.

Homer then is but the assumed name of the author, who thought to secure a greater illusion among his readers, by representing himself as contemporary with the incidents related. Homer is the eyeless antique mask worn by Thales, as Ossian by Macpherson. And who can avoid detecting a latent Cretan in the poet, who places heaven on mount Ida?

May we not therefore venture to talk of the Iliad and Odyssey of Thales, a bard, who, to repeat the emphatic words of Plutarch, " was famed for wisdom and political ability; and, under color of exercising his art, performed as great things as the most excellent lawgivers"—a panegyric, which cannot have been merited by two different individuals, at a time when education was so rare; since, even now, after an elapse of two thousand years, it has not been redeserved by any subsequent poet.

§ 4.

Gotter — Hölty — Christian Count Stolberg — Frederic Leopold Count Stolberg — Bath-song — Song to Freedom of the nineteenth century — Ode to a Mountain Torent — The Penitent, &c.

Frederic William Gotter was born at Gotha on the 3rd of September, 1746. His constitution was feeble; and, but for the solicitous care of parents in affluent circumstances, he would probably have fallen an early victim to the various ailments, with which he was assailed. Reared at home, and provided with the best masters, his accomplishments were prematurely conspicuous; and it was judged expedient that he should travel, at sixteen, under the guidance of a tutor, as well for the establishment of his health, as for the sake of acquiring modern languages. After making the tour of France, he sojourned some time at Paris, took lessons of Italian, and in 1763 returned home; whence he was sent to Göttingen, and passed three years there in studying the law. Already he was impassioned for French literature, had translated several plays of Voltaire, *Merope*, *Alzire*, and *Oreste*, and brought with him a Parisian Almanac of the Muses, which suggested the successful undertaking of a similar publication in German. Polished in his manners, liberal in his expenditure, fastidious in his taste, Gotter became a favourite companion in the literary circle of

Göttingen, and was praised for the elegant style in which his effusions were couched.

In 1766 Gotter returned to his native place, and obtained the situation of archivist to the duke of Saxe-Gotha, which office he held until 1770, when he was sent to Wetzlar as secretary of legation. But his health having again become impaired, he obtained in 1774 leave to travel, visited Lyons, the Italian Alps, Zurich and Geneva, and got acquainted with Lavater and Gesner, with whom he afterwards corresponded.

In 1782 he was made private secretary to the duke, and was in a great degree released from the toils of office. Leisure and inclination to compose he now possessed; but his efforts were transient, his vivacity decayed, his correction less assiduous; and his latter works were thought inferior to his juvenile productions. His bad health progressively lessened, and at length suspended, his activity; he lived however, in a morbid state until the 18th of March, 1797.

Two volumes of his dramatic works had appeared in 1778 and 1779; a third came out in 1795: two volumes of his minor poems had appeared in 1787 and 1788; a third was issued by a friend in 1802 accompanied with a biographic memorial. More indebted to elegance of diction than force of conception, his pristine popularity has been perpetually on the wane; for style is a transient, thought an enduring, charm. The Abbé Bertola, in the second volume of his *Idea della bella letteratura Alemanna*, has beatifully rendered several little poems of Gotter; and a song of his has been translated into English in the *Specimens of German Lyric Poets*, p. 30.

The father of Hölty settled in 1742 as preacher at Mariensee, in the Hanoverian territory: he successively married three wives, and by the second of them, whose maiden name was Gössel, he had two daughters and a son, Louis Henry Christopher Hölty, the poet, who was born the 21st of December, 1748. In his early youth he was eminently beautiful; but, having, in the tenth year of his age, caught the natural small-pox, his complexion was impaired, his visage pitted, and his eyes so deplorably injured, that for a long time his sight was in danger, and he was obliged, during nearly half a year, to abstain from reading, of which he was excessively fond. His mother died of the same complaint caught at the same time.

Hölty was attentively instructed by his father, and was not put to school until he was sixteen, when he was sent to finish his preparatory education at Celle, and was thence removed, in the twentieth year of his age, to Göttingen; where he became intimate with Voss especially, and with Bürger, the Stolbergs, and the rest of the Göttingen friends.

The study of theology was prescribed to Hölty by his father, who could not however afford the usual degree of pecuniary assistance to his son; the young man therefore had to give private lessons, and to earn a part of his subsistence: he also translated occasionally for the booksellers. His manners are praised for their simplicity, suavity, and calmness; he was somewhat inclined to melancholy, and, when attacked with pulmonary consumption, he foresaw a fatal termination of his disease with a resignation bordering on complacence. He died at the age of twenty-eight, in September 1776.

The poems which he wrote, chiefly while at Göt-

tingen, had been successively inserted in the Almanac of the Muses, and other periodic publications: they have a propriety and neatness, which seemed to promise excellence. After his death they were collected by his friend Voss, and published separately, in 1800, with a biographic and critical memoir prefixed, and were received with extensive welcome. They include ballads much inferior to Bürger's, songs, elegies, odes, and what might be called "exhalations," short simple expressions of natural feeling concerning some contiguous occurrence. In the specimens of German lyric Poets printed in 1823, at London, three poems are ascribed to Hölty, the originals of which do not occur in Vossen's edition of the works of this poet.

Christian, count Stolberg, was born the 15th of October, 1748, at Bramstedt in Holstein, which was the entailed seat of a family so conspicuously noble, that it could enumerate among its ancestors Charlemagne and Alfred. But as the father count Christian Gunther had employments under the Danish government, he frequently wintered with his household in Copenhagen, or summered, on the coast of Seland, in a marine pavilion belonging to the king of Denmark. The minister Bernstorff intervisited with the Stolbergs, and at his table young Christian was introduced to Klopstock, who inspired him with the love of poetry and piety. Count Christian-Gunther died in 1765; but the widow persisted in the domestic education, which had been hitherto given to her children by able preceptors, and first sent her two elder sons, Christian and Frederic Leopold, together to college at Göttingen in 1770. There they became acquainted with Bürger

and his set, and both wrote several poems. Christian however was a less brilliant and a less original poet than his younger brother; and although his translations from Anacreon, Sophocles, and Theocritus, are read with approbation; although his best ballad, Eliza von Mansfield, has been printed among the fraternal works; although some odes which he addressed to Bürger, to the countess of Raventlau, whom he married in 1777, and to others, have also been preserved; yet the warmest of his poems was dictated by the warmest of his passions, which was a devoted affection and enthusiastic friendship for his brother. Like Plato, like Sir Isaac Newton, Frederic Leopold was born on the 7th of November; and *The Seventh of November* is the title of Christian's glowingly affectionate congratulatory epistle, or ode, to his brother on the twenty-eighth anniversary of his birth-day, the first time they had passed the day in separation. Christian had no children by his wife. He just lived to survive his darling friend, and to place a pathetic valedictory elegy on his tomb: his own death, which took place in January, 1823, having probably been accelerated by his regret. He was one of the best of brothers, and of the most estimable of men.

Frederic Leopold, born, as has just been observed, on the 7th of November, 1750, was the second son of Christian-Gunther, count Stolberg; and as the junior branches of high families in Germany inherit nobility, he also was entitled, count Stolberg. In the family mansion at Bramstedt, he first saw the day-light, and passed six years there, chiefly under the care of his

excellent mother, a noble lady of Franconia, whose maiden name was Castell.

In 1756 the father obtained official employment at the Danish court, and removed to Copenhagen; where he engaged a private tutor for his sons, and where he passed the greater part of the year, revisiting his estate only during the autumnal months, when his avocations best permitted. In the summer he frequently occupied a marine pavilion, picturesquely situate on the coast of Seland, and belonging to the king of Denmark. On this spot Frederic Leopold loved best to reside: the situation was romantic, and in unison with his enthusiastic or poetic turn: he found amusement in walking on the shore, in rowing or sailing on the sea, and in bathing, for he was an expert swimmer. One of the earliest of his poems runs nearly thus: it is entitled,

BATH-SONG TO SING IN THE SOUND.

I.

Mild zephyrs are streaming,
The sun is still beaming,
And sparkles the wave;
It looks so alluring,
The coolness securing,
Our limbs let us lave.

II.

Here, where either ocean,
Like armies in motion,
Are met in the plain;
We 'll plunge through the billow,
And floating we 'll pillow
Our heads on the main.

III.

Though Titan be sinking,
The sea-nymphs are winking,
And proffer their kiss.
The moon is arising,
Nor shames at surprizing
Our innocent bliss.

IV.

O'er glittering surges
The calm swimmer urges
His wanderings soon:
O exquisite pleasure!
To bathe at our leisure,
With sun and with moon.

These pastimes did not last long: but the memory of them often arose radiant in the fancy of Frederic Leopold at a later period, and has suggested many a beautiful allusion. In "Hellebek," in "The Mountain-Torrent," and especially in "The Seas," an ode, which so sublimely depicts the confluence of the Atlantic and the Baltic, and so happily contrasts the distinct character of either ocean, the traces of this residence on the coast of Seland are conspicuous.

The decease of count Christian-Gunther, in 1765, occasioned the widow to return to Bramstedt, where she continued to superintend the education of her sons under the preceptor chosen by her husband until 1770, when both the young men were sent, at the same time, to Göttingen. The period spent at Copenhagen had not been without its influence. Klopstock was, as it were, the poet-laureate of the court of Denmark; and his high reputation there naturally drew the early attention of Frederic Leopold to his writings; and contributed to prepare in the youth an analogous tendency of mind. In odes, in Klopstockian metres, his pristine

essays of versification were exhaled: he also translated assiduously from the greek classics. The imitation of Klopstock is peculiarly apparent in his

SONG OF FREEDOM,

FOR THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

Why dost thou linger thus, O morning sun?
Do the cool waves of ocean stay thy march?
Why dost thou linger thus,
Sun of our day of fame!
Rise: a free people waits to hail thy ray.
Turn from yon world of slaves thine eye of fire;
On a free people shed
The glories of thy beam.
He climbs, he climbs aloof, and gilds the hills;
A rosier radiance dances on the trees;
Sparkling the silver brook
To the dim valley flies.

Now thou art bright, fair stream; but once we saw
Blood in thy waves, and corses in thy bed,
And grappling warriors choak'd
Thy swollen and troubled flood.
With fluttering hair the flying tyrants sped—
Pale, trembling, headlong, to thy waters sped—
Into thine angry wave
Pursuing freemen sprang.
Blood of the horses dy'd thy azure stream—
Blood of the riders dy'd thy azure stream—
Blood of the tyrant's slaves—
Blood of the tyrant's slaves.
Red was the meadow, red thy rushy brink
Reeking with slaughter. In the bush of thorn
Clothes of the flying stuck,
Hair of the dying stuck.

At the rock's foot the nation-curber lay;
Apollyon's sceptre-wielding arm was stiff,
Broken his long long sword,
Wounded his groaning horse.
Dumb the blasphemer's the commander's tongue,
Nor hell nor man gave heed: his conscious eye
Still roll'd, as if to ask
The brandish'd spear for death;
But not a son of Germany vouchsafed
With pitying hand the honourable steel:
Was not the curse of God
Upon his forehead stamp'd?
As o'er her prey the screaming eagle planes,
O'er him was seen the wrath of heaven to lour.
He lay till midnight wolves
Tore out the unfeeling heart.

But ah! the young heroic Henry fell;
The castle-walls of Remling rang with groans;
Mother and sister wept
Their fallen, their beloved;
His lovely wife not e'en a parent's hope
Could lift above the crushing load of wo,
She, and the babe unborn
Partook his early tomb.

Not one of all the slavish crew escap'd.
Like to the fallow leaves which stormwinds throw,
Their corses far and wide
Lay weltering in the field;
Or floated on the far-polluted stream
Welcome not now where health or pity dwell.
Back from the bloody wave
The thirsting horse withdrew;
The harmless herd gazed and forbore to taste;
The silent tenants of the wood forbore;
Only the vulture drank,
The raven and the wolf.

The glee of the victor is loud on the hill,
Like nightingales singing where cataracts rush,
The song of the maiden,
The warriors' music,
In thundering triumph are mingled on high,
Or call on the echoes to bound at the dance,
With drum and with cymbal,
With trumpet and fife.
High in the air the eagle soars of song,
Beneath him hawks, our lesser triumphs, flit;
O'er the last battle now
His steadier wing is pois'd.

Fierce glow'd the noon; the sweat of heroes bath'd
The trampled grass; and breezes of the wood
Reach'd but the foe, who strove
Three hours in doubtful fight.
Like standing halm that rocks beneath the wind,
The hostile squadrons billow to and fro;
But slow as ocean ebbs
The sons of freedom cede.
When on their foaming chargers forward sprang
Two youths, their sabres lightning: and their name
Stolberg—behind them rode,
Obeying, thousand friends.
Vehement, as down the rock the floody Rhine
Showers its loud thunder and eternal foam;
Speedy, as tigers spring,
They struck the startled foe.
The Stolbergs fought and sank; but they achiev'd
The lovely bloody death of freedom won:
Let no base sigh be heard
Beside their early grave!
Time was, their grandsire wept a burning tear[4]
Of youthful hope that he might perish so;
Upon his harp it fell
To exhale not quite in vain.

4 This Spartan sentiment would have something of harshness, had F. L. Stolberg been a father: he was still a bachelor.

Then, through the mist of future years, he saw
Battles of freedom tinge the patrial soil,
Saw his brave children fall,
And smil'd upon their doom.

Sunk was the sun of day; with roseate wing
The evening fann'd the aged Rhine; but still
The battle thundered loud,
And lightened far and wide.
Glad, from the eaves of heaven, thro' purple clouds
Herman and Tell, Luther and Klopstock, lean'd,
And godlike strength of soul
And German daring gave.
To the pale twilight wistful look'd the foe;
Dimm'd was the frown of scorn, the blush of shame;
They fled, wide o'er the field
Their scattering legions fled.
With dreeping swords we followed might and main.
They hop'd the mantle of the night would hide,
When o'er the fires arose
Angry and fell the moon.
Night of destruction, dread retributress,
Be dear and holy to a nation freed;
The country's birth-day each
More than his own should prize.
More than the night which gave his blushing bride.
Thy song of triumph in our cities shout,
The song which heroes love,
The song to freedom dear.
Voices of virgins mingle in the lay,
As floats its music o'er rejoicing crowds,
So murmur waterfalls
Beside the ocean's roar.

Germania—thou art free! Germania free.
Now may'st thou stately take thy central stand
Amid the nations; now
Exalt thy wreathed brow,
Proud as thy Brocken, when the light of dawn
Reddens its forehead, while the mountains round

Still in wan twilight sleep,
And darkness shrouds the vale.

Welcome great century of Liberty,
Thou fairest daughter of slow-teeming Time,
With pangs unwont she bare
But hail'd her mighty child;
Trembling she took thee with maternal arm;
Glad shudders shook her frame; she kist thy front,
And from her quivering lip
Prophetic accents broke:
'Daughter, thou tak'st away thy mother's shame.
Thou hast avenged thy weeping sisters' woe.
Each to the yawning tomb
Went with unwilling step:
Each in her youth had hop'd to wield thy sword
And hold thy balance, dread retributress;
Bold is thy rolling eye,
And strong thy tender hand.
And soon beside thy cradle shall be heard
The tunes of warfare and the clash of arms.
And thou shalt hear, with smiles,
As on thy mother's breast.
I see thee quickly grow; with giant step,
With streamy golden hair, with lightening eye,
Thou shall come forth, and thrones
And tyrants tread to dust.
Thy urn, though snatch'd with bloody hand, shall pour
O'er Germany the stream of liberty.
Each flower of paradise
Delights to crown its brink.

A more original, and perhaps an earlier poem is the

ODE TO A MOUNTAIN-TORRENT.

Immortal youth,
Thou streamest forth from rocky caves;
No mortal saw
The cradle of thy might;

No ear has heard
Thy infant stammering in the gushing spring.

How lovely art thou in thy silver locks;
How dreadful thundering from the echoing crags!
At thy approach
The fir-wood quakes;
Thou castest down, with root and branch, the fir;
Thou seizest on the rock,
And roll'st it scornful like a pebble on.

Thee the sun clothes in dazzling beams of glory,
And paints with colors of the heavenly bow
The clouds that o'er thy dusty cataracts climb.

Why hasten so to the cerulean sea?
Is not the neighbourhood of heaven good,
Not grand thy temple of encircling rocks,
Not fair the forests hanging o'er thy bed?
Hasten not so to the cerulean sea;
Youth, thou art here
Strong as a god,
Free as a god.

Though yonder beckon treacherous calms below,
The wavering lustre of the silent sea,
Now softly silver'd by the swimming moon,
Now rosy-golden in the western beam;
Youth, what is silken rest,
And what the smiling of the friendly moon,
Or gold and purple of the evening sun,
To him who feels himself in thraldom's bonds!

Here thou canst wildly stream
As bids thy heart:
Below are masters ever-changeful winds,
Or the dead stillness of the servile main.

Hasten not so to the cerulean sea;
Youth, thou art here
Strong as a god,
Free as a god.

Like his own mountain-torrent, Frederic Leopold streamed somewhat wildly in Göttingen. Other noble collegians have done the same in this country; nor is it to be lamented. When there are no excesses in youth, there is seldom inherent vigor enough for the desirable energy of maturity: experience is acquired without loss of frankness, where there are no domestic prejudices to offend: and it is always an object to know what are the natural sympathies of man, and how much there is of conventional in the exoteric morality professed in houses, where wives, mothers, and sisters, reside.

Frederic Leopold herded with Bürger's set, with the Göttingen friends, as they were called; and was one of those who went over to Alten-Gleichen to hear read the still manuscript Lenore. The impression was necessarily vivid; it was also lasting; and produced some attempts, if not at direct imitation, yet at analogous composition. The two best of Stolberg's ballads are entitled Rudolph, of which a satisfactory translation occurs in the specimens of German Lyric Poets, p. 116, and The Penitent, which follows:

THE PENITENT.

I.

Inne the purer olden time,
When for man to sin was crime,
And a woman might not straye
Ene a hair-breadth from the waye
Of yhallow'd chastitie;
Rode a knight through moor and grime,
From Armorique come to see
Arthur pride of chivalrie.

II.

Loud the storm, and black the night,
And his horse in wearie plight,
He beheld a distant gleam
Thro a castel-windore beam.
Much the loftie elm-trees swang,
As he pac'd the alley's side;
While the wind-gust's hollow twang
Round the rocking towrets sang.

III.

To the cullis-gate he rode,
Knock'd aloud: the while he stode,
Chatter'd much his teeth for cold;
Frost and sleet had bleach'd the wold.
Trustie knaves anon were seen,
Who his palfrey took, and stowde,
Leading him, by torches sheen,
To the prow Sir Egerwene.

IV.

Inne the base court him doth meete
The nobil host with friendlie greete,
As a hearty Briton wones.
"Welcome stranger for the nones:
Lo! thie beard doth sheen with ice,
And thie hand is numb of sleet;
Hard has been thy winter-ryse,
Foode and rest I shall alyse."

V.

Then he leades the frozen wight,
Where the chemnee brenneth bright.
Down the hall, so high and long,
His forefathers' weapons hong,
Iron sarkes in black arraye:
There, I ween, at dead of night,
When the roddie gledes decaye,
Yerne the owners ghosties straye.

VI.

Soon the slughornes call to mele,
And the knighties tope their fele;
But at once their glee is farre,
For a door doth softe unbarre,
And a woman, wo-forworne,
Whom the blackest wedes concele,
Slowlie steppeth them beforne,
Bare her bowed head, and shorne.

VII.

Wan she was, but fayre to see,
As the moon at full may be,
Yet did paleness, gryse and glome,
Ore the stonied stranger come:
From his hand the bumper fell;
For he lookte to see her gree
Soone an uglie sprite of hell,
Rysing from his dismal cell.

VIII.

More and more she draweth nie,
Speaketh not, but sitsomelie
Cometh to their plenteous borde,
Which doth onelie bredde afforde
For her much-forbidden lip.
To the vassal standing bie
Then she noddes, that he should trip,
For she needeth drink to sip.

IX.

Lo! he seeketh out a skulle,
Rinseth it, and filleth fulle
Of the water from the spring,
And with piteous gait doth bring.
Meeklie then her face she lowte;
Inne her eyne a tear upswoll;
And she shudder'd, stared abowte,
Drank her draught, and totter'd owte.

X.

" I beswear thee, tell me, man,"
So the stranger-knight began,
" What this woman's sin hath been,
That thou loadest her with teen;
Of her teares the silent prayer
Canst thou from thie bosom ban?
She is as an aungel fayre,
Meeke and mild as children are."

XI.

" Stranger, she is fayre, I knowe,
Once did I her seeming trowe,
Hong delighted on her looke,
Thrill'd for pleasaunce when she spoke,
And her honeyde wordes beleev'd.
Woman's bosom who can knowe?
All her winsome lookes deceev'd,
Were in falsehood's loom yweav'd.

XII.

For her love was given and gone
To a squire that here did wone,
Whom from dole and derthe I drewe,
And upbred in gentle thewe.
After wearie war was o'er,
Homeward ones I sped alone,
And at unawaited hour
Hasten'd to my wed-bed bower.

XIII.

Lo! her sighte mie eyne dismayde,
Inne the clasp of ewbrice layde,
With the squire of lowe degree;
Boiling did mine anger gree.
Swifte mie righteous sworde I toke,
And his pulse of life I quayde:
Her I weened to have stroke,
Wile mie sowle for cholcr quoke.

XIV.

But forthwith she did her throwe
At mie feete, and to the blowe
Layde her paler bosom bare.
Ruthful shudders through me fare.
And the shape of helle was come
Full of harowe to mie browe.
No methought I maye not dome
Her to the ycursed home.

XV.

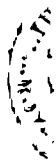
And I spake: "Thou shalt, beldame,
Pay the finaunce of mie shame,
Al it be thie life I spare:
Though the fiend thie sprite shuld tare
What have I to gain therebye?
No: with prayer, and teare, and grame,
Earne the pardon of thie shame,
I rallent not till I die.

XVI.

"Then her head I shavde and shore,
Toke the gaudes and gems she wore,
Clad her limmes in mourning weede,
Of her weeping had no heede.
Woes enow I make her beare.
Wilt thou know her painsome stowre,
From her lips thou mayst it heare;
Cheere thie sprite, and follow neare."

XVII.

Down a narrow grese they straye,
Dank and dim their winding waye.
"Is it to a toome we go?"
Spake the faltring stranger tho.
"What doth feare alreadie cling
To thie breste?" the knight did saye;
"Harke! I hear her gittern ring;
Hymnes of penaunce she doth sing."



XVIII.

Deeper down the vault so colde,
Both the knights in silence strollde:
Suddenlie Sir Egerwene
Op'd a dore, and she was seene,
By a single lampis fleare,
Sitting in a dongeon-holde:
On her eye-lash blinks the cleare
Halie God-atoning teare.

XIX.

" Bitter, bitter is her wo."
Saith the guest, as in they go.
Sternlie frown'd his British guide,
And, advancing to her side,
Op'd a grate with sudden tone,
And began therein to show
Where against the mildewde stone
Stood a headless skeletone.

XX.

Then he spake: " Behold the man,
Who this woman's lyking wan;
Who, by his advoutrous game,
Brought his master's bed to shame.
Now I ween she shuld not shrink
Him from near her side to ban:
From his sight she may not slink,
And his skull doth hold her drink."

XXI.

Ere they left the dismal cell,
Did the stranger wish her well,
And a pardon for the sin
She bewailed there within.
Then she spake with gentle moane,
Through her lippes so swote and pale:
" Yeares may not my guilt atone;
Righteouslie mie lord hath done."

XXII.

Now they sought their roomes: til daye
Sleepless did the traveller laye;
The remembrance of her sight
Haunted him the livelong night;
How she, by the lamp so wan,
Wept, and sang, and preeres did saye.
Chilly sweats him overran,
Thoughts of anguish him unman.

XXIII.

Ere the golden howre of dawn,
On had he his armure drawn;
Parting to his host he said:
"Til thie wife in earth be laid
Through the sorrow undergone,
Leave her not in thraldom's pawn;
I have nere a woman knone,
Half so fair, and wo-begone."[5]

Both the Stolbergs had much the pride of nobility. After leaving Göttingen they collected their poems in an octavo volume, which appeared at Leipzig in 1779, to which this somewhat haughty motto, from the VII book of Æneid, was prefixed—

Ceu duo nubigenæ, quum vertice montis ab alto
Descendunt, Centauri,

as if it were a condescension in the nobleman to enter the arena of intellectual conflict, and to display that

[5] In some editions this stanza concludes the poem:

And at length her gentle guize,
And her patient peaceful wize,
Won Sir Egerwene to ruth;
He forgave her sad untruth:
Heeded now his threat no more,
No forgiveness to alyse;
Joyed with her as of yore:
Many worthie sons she bore.

native and sterling strength of mind, of which artificial rank is but the tinsel representative.

About this time the two brothers visited Switzerland, and undertook a pedestrian tour among the Italian Alps. Göthe, Lavater, Salis, were alternately the companions of their stroll.

The next enterprize of Frederic Leopold was a translation of the Iliad: he had indeed begun it at Göttingen in competition with Bürger; but it was not completed for publication until 1781. It is an elegant and stately poem; less learnedly precise than the subsequent version of Voss, but it has a flow and a majesty, which long preserved for it a seeming preference of popularity. A short specimen from the third book will suffice:

> These were of them who sat at the Scæan gate, of the elders
> Spar'd, for their age, the burden of war, still useful in council,
> Shriller of voice than the crickets, which startle the forest with chirping,
> Perch'd on the leaf-clad trees: so sat these men in the turret.
> Soonly as Helena came, thus spake they aloud to each other:
> "'T is no wonder we wage with the well-greav'd Grecians this warfare,
> Bearing for such a woman so long our distresses; for truly
> Like the immortal gods is she shapen, and lovely to look on.
> Yet were it well she return'd to her home in the ships of her country,
> Rather than bring upon us and our children this heirdom of evil."

Stolberg calls the greek gods by their greek names; and uses the latin *f* to represent the *phi*—Zeus, Here, Afrodite, Poseidon, Artemis, Demeter, instead of Jupiter, Juno, Venus, Neptune, Diana, Ceres, &c. This innovation surely merits adoption: but perhaps some vowel mark is desirable to easily distinguish between epsilon and eta, between omicron and omega.

After the return of Frederic Leopold to Holstein, the duke of Oldenburg, prince-bishop of Lubeck, appointed him resident, or envoy, to the court of Den-

mark; a welcome appointment, as it placed him in contiguity with his brother-in-law, count Bernstorff, and was so nearly a sinecure, as to interfere little with his literary occupations. Besides it added enough to his income to enable him to settle; and on the 11th of June, 1782, he was united to a countess, Agnes of Witzleben, whom he saw at Eutin, and married there, and who conciliated alike the welcome of her husband's relations, and his own tender attachment.

The moral satire, entitled "Iambics," appeared in 1784; but, as it includes complaints against solitude, it seems to have been written while he was still single. A translation of Æschylus occupied the first year or two of his marriage. In 1785 he accepted a diplomatic mission from the duke of Oldenburg to the court of Russia, and was rewarded for his services with the bailiwick of Neuenburg, where he went with his family to reside.

There he composed two chorus-dramas on the greek model, "Theseus, and the Suckling," which were printed with some plays of his brother's in 1787, and a romance in dialogue, "The Iland," which may be advantageously contrasted with Plato's "Republic," for the superior purity of its sentiments; and which well deserves to be translated into modern greek, as it projects the establishment, in a Mediterranean iland, of a free and independent people, whose republican institutions were to realize in the national manners a steady adherence to the beautiful and the good. In the course of this classical romance a quotation occurs from an unpublished, and perhaps unfinished, poem of the author, which was to have been entitled "Futurity." This fragment will not displease.

Over the quivering string air-habitant Harmony hovers,
Over the virgin's mind-steept tone more soft than the flute's voice.
Raptures of loftier poets assailing the soul of the hearer
Call from her echoing halls coy Melody, henceforth
Bride to immortal Song, and his chaste nor ignoble companion.
Thee degenerate ages profan'd, all beauteous enchantress!
Wildly invoking thy holier footstep to stroll in the lewd choir,
Led along by their soulless enervated metres, which shrunk back
When in the glow of the dance was offer'd majestic thy right hand.
Hasten with step unreluctant to wander delighted and easy
Where the true bard leads, now soft as the lay of his mildness,
Now with the rapid and lightning ascent of the seraphs of heaven.

A fine passage is also quoted from an elegy of Klopstock, which, as it exemplifies the alternate hexameter and pentameter lines so frequently employed in the mournful poetry of the Germans, may deserve transcription.

Denmark's beautiful rite, which, e'en on the grave of the rustic
Yearly scatters some flower, emblem of hope to the just;
Come more solemnly now to the spot where reposes the monarch,
Scattering wreaths of the spring, glad resurrection in thought:
Fair soul-cheering symbol of hope in rerisal! ah wherefore
Seems the eye troubled with woe, glitters a tear on the wreath?

The romance concludes with an ideal form of worship in verse, which offers a proper text for an oratorio.

Almost immediately after the publication of the Iland, in 1788, a heavy blow of fate fell on Frederic Leopold: his beloved wife Agnes died on the 17th of November of that year, almost without her being aware of the approaching catastrophe; and thus he saw, to use his own expression, his heaven on earth closed. His brother Christian flew to his consolation, and persuaded him to return to the family-seat in Holstein, and to pass the winter there.

While he was visiting his relations at Copenhagen, the prince-regent of Denmark proposed to him a

diplomatic mission of considerable importance; and leave was obtained of the duke of Oldenburg that he might accept the employment. The Russians and Turks were at war. Sweden, as the ally of Turkey, had invaded Finland. Catharine applied to the king of Denmark, on the ground of some subsisting treaty, to invade Sweden from Norway. The king of Prussia sent word to Copenhagen, that, as the ally of Sweden, he should in such case invade Denmark, and this was a formidable threat. Count F. L. Stolberg went to Petersburg, and, probably by offering a subsidy instead of armed assistance, calmed a storm, which threatened the total dismemberment of the north of Europe. He staid some time at Petersburg, after his negociation was concluded, and returned by way of Berlin.

In this metropolis, at the house of the Sardinian ambassador, he became acquainted with a catholic lady, the countess Sofia of Redern, who was sister to the ambassador's wife, and the attachment became so strong that a marriage was the consequence, which was solemnized on the 15th of February, 1790.

Frederic Leopold had always wished to visit Italy: and, shortly after his second marriage, he undertook to travel over that classical region, accompanied by his bride, by his son of the first bed, and by the lad's tutor, Mr. Nicolovius. The history of this tour was published in four octavo volumes adorned with engravings, during the year 1794. It details a journey up the Rhine, through Switzerland to Turin, Geneva, and Pavia; next to Florence, Rome, Naples, Salerno, and Sicily; which iland is examined with peculiar care, and its history learnedly illustrated. The count returns through Ancona, Bologna, and Venice, into Germany, loiters at Vienna, and vanishes in Saxony:

the picture-galleries of Düsseldorf and Dresden forming his boundary-pillars.

This peregrination was completed between July 1791 and December 1792: the peculiar feature of the narrative is an uniform endeavour to employ the reader's attention on objects of agreeable contemplation. Of men, the writer mentions only the distinguished, the wise, and the good; of governments, he analyzes only the free; in works of nature and of art, his select notice is confined to the sublime and the beautiful. Objects the most habituated to ridicule rise hallowed from his embellishing touch: even the liquefaction of saint January's blood is mentioned with respectful scepticism; and the pilgrim's ladder in the Lateran is converted, by his learned inquiries, into a relique dear to the votaries of freedom. By this poetical contrivance, Italy is here idealized into a terrestrial paradise; where the author, like another Anacharsis, has only to look about him, and to praise. His motto, τὰ καλὰ ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς, well characterizes the objects of his fortunate pursuit.[6]

The more than candor, the panegyrical tone, in which all the ceremonies of the catholic church are imposingly described, the approbation given to its idolatry, and to that belief which it impresses of the continued existence, and efficacious intercession of the saints, announces a state of mind in the author, which was preparing him to embrace catholicism. With Avellino, bishop of Bologna, he became acquainted, and corresponded with him on points of faith.

At the close of the fourth volume occur some epistles in rime, addressed to J. A. Ebert,[7] and entitled,

6 For a more detailed account of these Travels, which contain perhaps the best specimens of German prose extant; see *Monthly Review*, vol. xviii, p. 535.

7 Concerning J. A. Ebert, see vol. I, p. 231.

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Hesperides, which are three in number, and agreeably condense in allegoric forms the general impression made on the poet by his Italian excursion. The third Hesperide is the best.

After his return from Italy, Frederic Leopold came to his residence at Eutin, and was intrusted by the prince-bishop of Lubeck with the prime-ministry of that little ecclesiastic principality. His public cares however did not interrupt his literary pursuits, and he translated the Dialogues of Plato, to which he attached anti-jacobin notes; having from a friend to the principles of the French revolution, become its adversary, in consequence of the atrocious scenes which occurred under the government, or anarchy, of the Convention and the Directory.

On the death of the Russian empress Catharine II, in 1797, he was deputed by his sovereign to Petersburg to congratulate the new emperor Paul on his accession, and was in consequence decorated with the order of St. Alexander Newski. He was preparing to follow the court to Moscow, when he was attacked with fever. An English physician, Dr. Robertson, attended him; and so far reestablished his health, as to enable him to set off for the baths at Carlsbad, where his recovery was in great measure completed.

A something of languor however remained behind, which indisposed him to active employment; without at all impairing his passion for study, and for sedentary composition. In 1800 he resigned all his official situations, took a house in the old-fashioned city of Münster, declared himself a convert to catholicism, and was formally admitted to the communion of the Romish church. Except the eldest daughter by the first bed, all his family declared their adhesion to this

new religion of their father; the eldest son, perhaps from indifference, the children by the second bed from the influence of maternal education. He had in all fifteen children, of whom thirteen survived him.

This conversion was much censured in Germany, especially by Voss, but surely without reason. If the usual march of conviction be from believing more to believing less; yet apostacy, from whatever to whatever creed, is always so far a merit, that it implies inquiry, and the exercise of private judgement: and when it enables a family to walk together to the house of God, and to foster the hope of a reunion on high, even if this world should sever the fond ties of their relationship, it almost acquires the character of a duty of the heart.

On the continent of Europe, the gentleman, and Frederic Leopold was emphatically so, is seldom brought up with much solicitude for any positive doctrine; he is taught to be a liberalist, because it is felt that the statesman ought not to be afraid of the priest: and a point of honor is substituted to interior conviction, as a security for the expedient choice of faith. Among the catholics, the moralist insists on the duty of conforming to the religion of one's ancestors; among the protestants, on the duty of conforming to the religion of the magistrate; but Frederic Leopold seems to have invented a new point of honor, and a most rational one, the duty of conforming to the religion of one's father-in-law.

A young man is the happier while single, for being unincumbered with religious restraints; but, when the time comes for submitting to matrimony, he will find the precedent of Frederic Leopold well entitled to consideration. A predisposition to conform to the

religion of the father-in-law facilitates advantageous matrimonial connexions; it produces in a family the desirable harmony of religious profession; it secures the sincere education of the daughters in the faith of their mother; and it leaves the young men at liberty to apostatize in their turn, to exert their right of private judgement, and to choose a worship for themselves. Religion, if a blemish in the male, is surely a grace in the female sex; courage of mind may tend to acknowledge nothing above itself; but timidity is ever disposed to look upwards for protection, for consolation, and for happiness.

The ecclesiastic reasons for conversion are often but the exoteric grounds of conduct; these however were paraded at great length by Frederic Leopold, in a *History of the Christian Religion*, which began to appear at Hamburg in 1806, and was progressively extended to fifteen volumes octavo. It was reprinted entire at Vienna in 1816. It has since been translated into Italian at the expense of the papal see, and issued from the printing-press of the Vatican. It brings down the history of the church only to the year 430; but the argument is so strongly put, that the duke of Meklenberg was converted by it, and has since embraced catholicism.

A pamphlet concerning Lessing, another on the Spirit of the Age, a dissertation on Christian Charity, and some other pious tracts, amused the leisure of Frederic Leopold's latter days. Be it also observed that he translated Ossian; but I have not the means of dating that exertion. He died on the 5th of December 1819, with a calm confidence in the divine mercy.

§ 5.

Kretschmann—Schubart—Jacobi—Pfeffel—Boie—Göckingk—Miller—Schlegel—Matthison—Milesian Tale—Neubeck—Poetesses.

CHARLES FREDERIC KRETSCHMANN, born in 1738 at Zittau, in Lusatia, published in 1764 a collection of lyric and epigrammatic poems, and in 1768, *Songs of Rhingulph the Bard*, which, in the manner of Klopstock, imitated the supposed primæval poetry of the forefathers of the country. This volume had temporary success; but is now forgotten: fables and allegories succeeded, and also expired.

In the catalogue of royal and noble authors occur several, who have not owed but lent celebrity to their writings, in consequence of the conspicuous situation they occupied. Though of humble origin, Christian Frederic Daniel Schubart belongs to this class. Born in 1739 he attempted in 1767 to draw attention by a volume of *Death-Songs*, which aim at an energy of diction, and a boldness of metaphor, bordering on rant. Having displeased the Austrian government, he was imprisoned by the duke of Würtemberg for ten years in the fortress of Hohen-Asperg; and there wrote *Poems of a Prisoner*, which were edited by a friend in 1785, and were eagerly read. After his release, the

interest excited by his misfortunes no longer accompanied his pen; and his autobiography is at present more consulted than his poetry, which was edited by his son in 1802.

John George Jacobi, born at Düsseldorf, in 1740, was sent to college at Göttingen, and, like his fellow-student Gotter, formed his taste on French models, and imitated the lighter poets of that nation, in his songs and lyric effusions. I do not willingly borrow the translations of others, but, not possessing Jacobi's poems, I transcribe one of them, nearly as rendered in the *Specimens of German Lyric Poetry*, p. 48.

ELEGY.

I.

Tell me where 's the violet fled,
  Late so gayly blowing;
Springing under Flora's tread,
  Choicest sweets bestowing.
Swain, the vernal scene is o'er,
And the violet blooms no more!

II.

Say, where hides the blushing rose,
  Pride of fragrant morning;
Garland meet for Beauty's brows;
  Hill and dale adorning.
Swain, alas, the summer 's fled,
And the hapless rose is dead!

III.

Bear me then to yonder rill,
Late so freely flowing,
Wat'ring many a daffodil
On its margin glowing.
Sun and wind exhaust its store;
Yonder rivulet glides no more!

IV.

Lead me to the bow'ry shade,
Late with roses flaunting;
Lov'd resort of youth and maid,
Amorous ditties chaunting.
Hail and storm with fury show'r;
Leafless mourns the rifled bow'r!

V.

Where 's the silver-footed maid,
With curling flaxen tresses;
Oft I 've met her in the glade,
Gathering water-cresses?
Swain, how short is Beauty's bloom!
Seek her in the grassy tomb.

VI.

Whither roves the tuneful swain,
Who, of rural pleasures;
Rose and violet, rill and plain,
Sung in deftest measures?
Swift Life's fairest vision flies,
Death has closed the Poet's eyes!

Through the patronage of the emperor Joseph II, Jacobi became in 1784 professor of fine literature in the university of Freiburg, and died in 1813.

Gottlieb Conrad Pfeffel was born in 1736 at Colmar in Alsace, and lost his sight at the age of twenty-one. The first edition of his poems appeared in 1761; and contains good epistles. He wrote a tragedy "The Hermit," and translated several plays from the French. Notwithstanding his blindness, he maintained himself as a schoolmaster, and died in 1809.

Heinrich Christian Boie of Holstein was born in 1744, was sent to Göttingen as a law-student, and passed first into the service of the Hanoverian afterwards into that of the Danish government. The eldest of the Göttingen friends, and a generous patron to all who needed his assistance, his indirect services to literature merit gratitude, although he never collected his contributions to the Almanac of the Muses, which, in concert with Gotter, he had founded. He died in 1806.

Leopold Frederic Günther von Göckingk was of noble descent, and born in 1748, at Grüningen, in the Prussian province of Halberstadt. He studied at Göttingen, frequented Bürger's set, produced two volumes of poems, which appeared in 1780 and 1782, in which are most remarked *Epistles*, rimed with ease and grace, which have a national and moral turn, and *Songs of two Lovers*, which display tenderness and talent. In 1793 Göckingk attained the office of counsellor of finance at Berlin.

John Martin Miller was born on the 2nd of De-

cember, 1750, at Ulm, where his father was professor of the oriental languages at the Gymnasium: in which institution he received the requisite elementary instruction, previously to his being sent to Göttingen in 1770. He frequented Bürger's friends; and wrote elegies, ballads, and lyric poems, which had both merit and popularity. A novel entitled *Siegwart und Mariamne*, which displays, perhaps, a superfine sensibility, had an astonishing success, and was twice translated into French: he also wrote *Carl von Burgheim*, or the correspondence of three college-friends. After staying five years at the university, as a theological student, he took priest's orders, and returned to his native city, where he obtained a pastoral office, and became greek professor at the Gymnasium. Pious and principled, he was much esteemed; and in 1810 was appointed by the king of Würtemberg consistorial counsellor: he died in June 1814.

It may seem hardly regular to notice the living; and yet, in the case of Göthe, it must be done, and at considerable length: why then omit Augustus William Schlegel, who, if more celebrated as a critic than a poet, yet studied at Göttingen in Bürger's time, and distinguished himself by promoting a taste for the difficult form of the Italian sonnet. In 1790 he published a collection of German sonnets, in which there are original samples of his own: here is a loose imitation of one of them, derived from vague recollection.

You bite your nails, and say 't is very hard
To range your rimings as befits a sonnet,
And seem to think that no unpractis'd bard
Should dare essay his doubtful hand upon it.

I 'll bet you, and consent to disregard
All thread-bare topics—aye to choose A Bonnet,
I write one in seven minutes on this card.—
Prepare your cash, you hear I 've almost won it.

Hail, more than diadem, tiara, crown,
Mitre, or scarlet hat, or helmet gray!
By them the masters of mankind are known,
Whom coward fear, or superstition, throne;
By thee, the rulers, whom we choose to' obey,
Whom Nature, Beauty, Pleasure, call to sway.

Schlegel's Lectures on the Drama were much attended; and his critical works, which appeared at Berlin in 1828, are highly esteemed.

Frederic Matthison was born in 1761, at Hohendadeleben, near Magdeburg, and was educated at Klosterberg; whence he was removed to Halle, as a student of theology. After leaving this university he was employed as a teacher in the philanthropic college at Dessau; but that institution having become somewhat obnoxious from the Socinian character of the lectures, he separated from it, and accepted the situation of tutor to some young Livonians, with whom, awhile he resided at Heidelburg, and afterwards travelled up the Rhine, through Lyons, Geneva, and Switzerland, into the South of France. Of this tour an account was published in a series of letters, which fill two volumes.

In 1794 the title of Aulic counsellor was conferred on Matthison, in consequence of the great popularity of his poems, which had appeared in 1791: to the prince of Hesse Homberg he was indebted for this distinc-

tion: it introduced him to the notice of the princess of Anhalt Dessau, whom he accompanied in her travels over Italy, as a sort of Cicerone: and after his return he established himself at Wörlitz near Dessau.

The margrave of Baden appointed him counsellor of legation in 1801, and ennobled him: so that his latter days were passed in elevated society.

Among the poems of Matthison may be remarked a descriptive sketch of the lake of Geneva, elegantly englished by Miss Plumtre, an elegy on the Ruins of a mountain-castle, a Milesian Tale, some fairy-songs, the Warning, translated in the *Specimens of German Lyric Poets*, p. 62, and several Inscriptions for the scenes and monuments, which struck the accomplished author in his various wanderings: a sensibility to the beauties of landscape is a marking feature in his productions. Exquisite polish of style, and melody of metre, fit these poems for the eye and ear of refinement: but force of thought, or originality of idea, seldom stamp them with the seal of immortality.

The Milesian Tale follows.

Now, a Milesian tale, my Adonida!

Beneath unfading laurels' sacred shade
A temple glitters from the sea-washt cape
Majestic in its ruin; and afar,
But within ken, an iland, blest by Pan,
Lifts through the wave its green and hilly breast.

Oft, at the moonlight hour, a bark was seen
To quit the shadowy precincts of the isle,
And waft a lonely rower to the bay,
Whence winds through myrtle groves a stony path
Up to the roseate gardens of the temple,
Where stands a marble groop of sculptur'd Graces.

Then on the pedestal a priestess sat,
Fair as the lifeless statues that she lean'd on,
Watching with eye and ear the dashing oar,
Praying the goddesses, whose feet she clasp'd,
To waft her Kallias safely o'er the main.

And presently he lands, he climbs the rock,
And sinks enraptur'd at Glycera's feet:
A lovely youth, such as Endymion seem'd
In more than mortal eyes. The moon-beams play'd
Bright on his beauteous form; the nightingale,
As if by the fair Lesbian's song inspir'd,
Warbled of love; and o'er the happy pair
The son of Aphrodite flung her veil.

The violets bloom'd and faded; by the brook
Roses supplanted them; then Ceres spread
Her whitening sheaves upon the golden fields;
And still the bark was seen to come and go.

Blest as the immortal tenants of Olympus,
This happy couple quaff'd the nectar, joy;
The past, the future, in the present lost.

Not brighter stream the waves of Arethusa,
Rippling beneath the roseate light of dawn,
Than glide the hours of love; but ah! they fly,
Like arrows darted from the bow of Phœbus,
Swiftly afar, and vanish. An olympiad
Seems but a summer's day, spent in the grove
Holy to Bacchus, where, with song and flute,
Youths, brandishing the ivy-circled thyrsus,
Provoke the nymphs to dance, and drink, and love.

An old magician, Agerochos, saw
The handsome priestess; and his iron heart
Glow'd with the phrenzy of a wild desire.
But she with scoffs receiv'd his wanton flame,
As Galatea when the Cyclops woced.

Her thoughts were centred on the sea-girt isle,
Whence starts, at sunset, for the nook below
The boat which Kallias moves with sparkling oar.
Tritons and Nereids often play around it,
And sea-born radiance gilds its glittering path.

One day—'t was Aphrodite's festival,
The priestess, rob'd in white, approach'd the altar,
Her hair was garlanded, and in her hand
She wav'd the silver censer, when on high,
Above the curling smoak-cloud, she beheld
In words of fire this threatening oracle.

" Fair priestess, heed the love of Agerochos.
He, since Deucalion's flood, has held the sceptre,
Which sways the dæmons of the elements,
Which veils in raven-darkness the moon's disk,
Arrests the cataract in its headlong course,
Bids palaces, like exhalations, rise,
Calls from their urns the spirits of the dead,
And changes human forms to bush, or tree,
Or scaly monster of the watery deep,
Or fen-fires wand'ring at the cavern's mouth.
Beware—and heed the love of Agerochos."

But she, in Aphrodite's shelter trusting,
Plac'd on the temple-wall a waxen tablet,
Which thus repell'd the suitor's vain address.

" When fig-trees bear the golden fruit that ripens
In the Hesperian gardens, when the pard
Sports with the dolphin in the azure sea,
When Ætna's fire shall join Caucasian ice,
Glycera first shall follow Hymen's torch
That marshals to the couch of Agerochos."

Dark was the anger of the potent wizard.
One night, while Kallias on Glycera's bosom
Lay in the tepid moonshine—thunders roll'd

And echoed from the cavern'd cliffs around,
Black clouds eclips'd the moon, amid the boughs
E'en of the sacred laurels lightnings flash'd,
And, through the enkindling forest's walls of flame,
A car, by dragons drawn, came rolling on.

Paler than marble of Pentelicus
Glycera and the youth embrac'd each other;
For in the car they saw the dragon-guider
Was the offended wizard, Agerochos.
Soon as he view'd the happy rival youth,
Like young Adonis clasp'd by Aphrodite,
Girt in the swanny arms of fair Glycera,
He touch'd them with the sceptre of revenge.

Dark were the stars, and red with lurid light
The roaring waves below, while lightnings quiver'd,
And crashing thunders told their fatal doom.

But when the storm abated, were not seen
The loving pair—their place of rest was blasted;
And two green myrtles sprouted from their tomb,
Beside the marble statues of the Graces.

Love hallows still their intermingling boughs;
And oft the nightingale will perch upon them,
And tell to twilight how they lov'd and perish'd.

A priest of Ephesus, who told me this,
Saw, when a boy, the temple's lingering ruin,
And the calm nook that moor'd the boat of Kallias.

Valerius William Neubeck was born in 1763, at Armstadt, in Thüringen, was brought up to the medical profession, and ultimately settled as a physician at Steinau, in Silesia. He translated, into German,

Dr. Sayers's *Dramatic Sketches of Northern Mythology*, published two volumes of miscellaneous poems in 1792 and 1795, and in 1798 a didactic poem entitled the Health-wells, or *Gesund-brunnen.*

Neubeck's verses are favourable specimens of the average poetry of the Germans: they are infinitely varied as to form and matter; and they are mostly elegant and short. Those of the latter description are addressed to the zephyr, to the apple-blossom, to the evening-cloud, to the nightingale, to sympathy, to Lina, &c. Among the loftier odes, that to the northern light distinguishes itself advantageously. Among the ballads from the English, W. J. Mickle's Hengist is most worthy of praise. The elegiac poetry is perhaps penned with the more feeling, and polished with the more perseverance; Morven, and the ruined hall of Ossian, produce an emotion very like the Songs of Selma.

The most extensive of these poems is entitled the Health-wells, a name by which mineral springs are designated in the German tongue. The fable may be deduced from the fourth book of Virgil's Georgics, where the bee-master, Aristæus, is admitted into the cave of the Nymphs, and initiated into the wonders of the subterranean world.

This poet in like manner supposes himself received by the Naiad of the Gera into her grotto. He is led to the iron cisterns of the chalybeate rills; to the vulcanic caverns and lava-lakes, in which the sulphureous waters are impregnated with caloric and vitriolic ingredients; and to the glittering crystalline chasms, whence the salt streams are distilled. The celebrated Thermopylæ of the antient and modern world are sung: those of Judæa, of Greece, of Italy, of Eng-

land, and of his own country. The diseases which require this remedy are enumerated, and the rites which Hygeia has prescribed for their exorcism ; the draft, the bath, and the mixture of mellow hock with the sparkling aerated waters. Exercise, dancing, the social pleasures, and the dangers of dissipation are described; and the melancholy story of Theone terminates these didactic hexameters.

Some original letters of Dr. Neubeck are preserved in the Biographic Memoir prefixed to Dr. Sayers's *Poetical Works*, published by S. Wilkin, Norwich, in 1828.

Among the poetesses, who adorned this period of German literature, may be enumerated Die Karschinn, a self-taught artist, the daughter of a publican, and the wife of a linen-weaver, who was born in 1722, and who published a volume of miscellaneous poems, which drew attention in the highest circles, and procured to her for a time genteel introductions at Berlin. These poems, like the straws and flies imbedded in amber, were curious rather than precious:

> The things themselves are neither rich nor rare;
> One wonders how the devil they came there.

More celebrated were Sofia Albert, an actress as well as an authoress, born at Erfent; Eliza von der Recke; Emilia von Berlepsch of Gotha, afterwards Harmes, who visited Scotland and published her tour under the title Caledonia; and Sofia Brentano, who edited the last of the Göttingen Almanacs of the Muses, and was allied surely to the Wieland family. But all these ladies rather resembled those

short-lived flowers, which variegate and perfume the garden-walks, than those perennial shrubs and trees, which encircle and overarch the alleys of the orchard.

§ 6.

Literary imposture—Forged Sequel to Nathan the Wise—The Monk of Libanon—Pfranger criticized.

LITERARY imposture has been so common in all ages and countries of the world, that even the oldest records of the human race, and the most valued sources of public instruction, include instances of it. The jewish scriptures contain a Pseudo-Daniel (see *Annual Review*, vol. iv, p. 119); the christian scriptures a Pseudo-Johannes (see *Monthly Magazine*, vol. x, p. 407); and other fragments are of questionable genuineness.

In European Greece similar phænomena occur. The poems attributed to Homer (see p. 76) are probably pseudonymous. Among the tragedies ascribed to Euripides, several may safely be regarded as the compositions of some other poet. If the Hecuba has every internal evidence of authenticity, the Trojan Dames, which dramatizes the same theme, and gives a different locality to the sacrifice of Polyxena, cannot have emanated from the same mind (see *Monthly Review*, vol. lxxxi, p. 121); for an author is consistent even in his fictions. The epistles of Phalaris, wherever they originated, are now acknowledged to be spurious.

At Alexandria in Egypt, the mass of forgery, executed in the names of the European greeks, was im-

mense. When the professors at the Serapeum invented a new and cheaper method of multiplying manuscripts, by dictating the original text, line by line, to seventy[8] copyists at once; they began to import at any price from Athens, and elsewhere, the best manuscripts of the European greek classics, and almost always added to their improved editions some suppositious pieces, which claimed to be written by the original author. Thus they contrived to sell their own fresh manuscripts, not only at a lower rate, but as more comprehensive and complete. To Homer's works was added the Batrachomyomachia, which Schöll ascribes to Pigres of Caria; to Herodotus was appended a life of Homer; to Plato, the Timæus; to Anacreon, an ode to the rose, and others. Hymns were forged in the name of Orpheus, and letters of galantry in those of courtezans.

Roman literature is not without similar instances. The Ætna, which claims to be a poem of Virgil, is by some authorities ascribed to Cornelius Severus. Among Cicero's correspondence, there are letters of doubtful authority. The existence of Seneca the tragedian has been disputed: and it is thought that the plays bearing his name are but translations from the greek by various hands. A spurious set of epistles between Seneca the philosopher and Saint Paul, once circulated in the religious world.

All the modern literatures abound with pseudonymous works; but these are hardly to be classed among forgeries. So in Italian, Il Ricciardetto appeared under the fictitious name of Carteromacho. Three of

8 From the letter of Aristeas to Philoerates, it may be conjectured, that this method of transcription was first applied to the greek version of the Jewish Scriptures, hence called the Septuagint.

the most celebrated French writers acquired their enduring reputations under assumed names, Molière, Voltaire, and Volney.

The more conspicuous forgeries in our domestic literature, are the poems attributed to Ossian, by Macpherson; the poems attributed to Rowley, by Chatterton; and the plays attributed to Shakspeare, by Ireland.

Closely akin in its character to this last instance of short-lived deception, is the forged sequel to Nathan the Wise, which soon after the death of Lessing, namely in 1782, made its appearance at Dessau, under the title of the Monk of Libanon. It was intended to pass for a sort of death-bed recantation of the poet, a final reconciliation of the philosopher to christianity. The same characters reappear on the stage; with the addition of a brother to Saladin, who was supposed to have been killed in battle, but who has recovered from his wounds, has embraced the christian religion, and exhibits in the most trying circumstances the sublimest beauties of the christian character. A heartfelt piety, a pure philanthropy, a restless beneficence, a calm resignation under afflictions and calumnies the most mortifying, a dignity reposing on a clear conscience and a full faith in the God of retribution, distinguish the excellent Monk of Libanon, and place him in the eyes of the religious world above the philosophic Nathan.

As the whole poem has much merit as a didactic drama, much merit as a close imitation of the manner of Lessing; and as it is but equitable to contrast the arguments of the christian schools with those already borrowed from the philosophic, I translate the poem entire. Of its reception and of its author, more shall be said at the close of the document.

The Monk of Libanon.

A SEQUEL TO NATHAN THE WISE.

Τοῖς λοιποῖς ἐν παραβολαῖς.

PERSONS OF THE PLAY.

SALADIN, *the sultan.* SITTAH, *his sister.* NATHAN, *a rich jew.* THE MONK OF LIBANON. A TEMPLAR *and* RECHA, *children of Saladin's brother.* IEZID, *an imam.* ABDALLAH, OSMAN, *and other mamalukes, &c.*

THE SCENE IS AT DAMASCUS.

ACT I.

SCENE.—The Sick-room of Saladin.

SALADIN *and* SITTAH.

SOON will the game be at an end, my sister,
I feel check upon check—next comes check-mate.
Death 's a keen player, Sittah, knows his moves—
But do not weep—
SIT. My brother—
SAL. What of this?
Of all the games that we have play'd together,
Have we left one unfinish'd: and shall death?
SIT. Not that indeed: but oft a single move
Will alter a whole plan, and give the weaker

The upperhand. This happens now perhaps:
Thy cheerfulness may be this lucky movement.
SAL. I doubt it much.
SIT. The body has gain'd greatly,
When the mind grows more sprightly. The connection
Between them is by far too close for either
Not to obey the other's influence.
SAL. Yes, while the strings are good, my dearest Sittah.
Happy the man whom nature has endow'd
With a light heart; for every thing to him
Wears smiles, whenever he is roving thro'
The walks of God's fair garden. Voice and words
And speech and gesture catch the gay impression;
And e'en on death he gazes with a smile,
Tho' joy be not the inmate of his soul.
It was the tongue, my Sittah, not the heart.
SIT. And thus my brother from his hapless Sittah
Tears the last ling'ring ray of hope, and feels not
How deep the poignard searches thro' her bosom.
As yet thy age is not mature for death;
Thine eye is still unfaded, still alive;
And 't will be long ere Saladin has liv'd
Enough to satisfy his noble heart.
Who shall do good henceforth? Who now extend
Protecting wings of justice and of love
O'er thy wide empire, ever provident
From danger and oppression to defend it?
With a fond father's hand who wipe away
Thy subjects' tears, now that around thy grave
Sweeps the death-angel? Saladin no more—
What then will Sittah be? No, no, my brother,
Good fruit is not to be cut off untimely.
Thou mayst not, shalt not die, thou best of men.
SAL. My dearest Sittah, come, embrace thy brother,
And with this kiss, and with these tears, receive
My thanks for all thy faithful fond affection.
Thou hast been much to me. Believe me, Sittah,
I should be glad to spend with thee another
Such life of joy and tenderness as this was;

But Fate has set th' irrevocable seal.
Be firm: but hide not from the wanderer
The coming evening, now that to its setting
His sun approaches. Yes, there would be much,
Much good indeed t' accomplish here below,
If all the evil that a man has done
Was here to be again aton'd by virtue.
SIT. Who ever did more good than Saladin?
SAL. Say rather who more evil?—Here, alas,
On a death-bed, the conscience does not judge
So partially as those who watch around it.
The whole life, deed by deed, then stands unveil'd
To the mind's eye. 'T is often gloomy with me—
I 've need of comfort, Sittah. Go, my love,
That these last hours at least be n't spent in vain,
Command that christian, musulman, and all
Who need our bounty, should receive what alms
The treasure will allow. Perhaps their prayers
Will find a hearing before God! Go, Sittah.
SIT. Most willingly, my Saladin. May God
Look graciously on the glad offering. First
I had to tell thee, brother, that a monk
Is come from Libanon—with medicine.
SAL. With medicine for the soul, can he heal that?
SIT. Not that, but—
SAL. Then he cannot help the body.
SIT. Who knows?
SAL. Whoever knows what passes here—
SIT. Wilt thou not speak with him?
SAL. Not now, not now;
An hour of slumber were more welcome to me.
And then I want to talk with Nathan. Send him.
SIT. I will. Heaven grant I find thy strength improv'd!
[*Saladin alone—speaks in broken sentences.*
SAL. O wo is him thus doom'd in labyrinths
To wander at the portals of the tomb,
Where a clear path is wanted most of all.
Yonder in life, amid a bustling world,
Where all conspires to cheat and flatter conscience,

Where for a purse a mamaluke worships thee,
'T is easy to forget that kings are men,
And God their judge. There, there, the heart will catch
At any tale that teems with specious doubts,
More than at naked truth which dissipates them.
The wreath of flowers then will hide the snare,
In which well-pleas'd we tangle our rash feet
Unheeding. If the judgement hesitate,
The conscience too will doubt, and from this doubt
On to denial is a little step
Soon strid. O doubts, doubts, when shall ye roll by,
And truth unclouded shine upon my soul?
Where stand I? Are all true—then all are false.
God loves them all, and God deceives them all.—
O Nathan, whither has thy tinsel wisdom
Misled me—now, how impotent, how helpless!
And shall the sleep of death check further striving
After the sight of truth?—God, God, conduct me
Thro' the dark vale to light.—Forgive me too.—

OSMAN *and* ABDALLAH.

OSMAN *enters first, approaches the sultan's bed, and perceiving that he is asleep, drops a curtain before him, and comes forward.*

He sleeps: a languid slumber! Death and life
Are struggling yet for victory. How pale,
How shrunk, how wither'd, yes; death gets the day,
And stretches him, whom neither sword, nor spear,
Nor horseman vanquish'd, scornful in the dust.—
[*Saladin sighs audibly.*
Thou sigh'st, good Saladin—Again—Once, once,
It was not so: in battle, where grim Death
Above thy head his bloody banner sway'd,
While dying foes sunk groaning at thy feet.
Not so, when at Nureddin's post of slaughter;
Then not a sigh escap'd the hero's breast.
Still less when Adhed sprang from th' only horse
Left him to drag about his fallen greatness,

And yielded to thy hand the tear-wet rein.
Such is the life of these same mad-cap folks;
They jostle, plunder, murder one another,
And rush head-foremost against death at last.
Run on, sirs, we shall follow in our turns,
But give us time to finish first the banquet
Which you have tabled for us.—What, I wonder,
Is this queer thing a sultan for? 'T is true
He needs must be, that out of his full purses
We mamalukes may have wherewith to sport,
And lead a merry life, while he, poor wight,
Tosses his care-craz'd head on silken bolsters.
As for you, Saladin—Gold we must have;
Live you, or die you. There are other fools:
Gold—and thou shalt be caliph, sultan, all!
If not: the mamaluke has got a sword,
Has got a dagger——

ABDALLAH, *who has heard the last words, says while entering*, 'T is a very pity,
That you great folks can't hear, while you are sleeping;
Can't hear when you are dead!—that once at least
You might be told the truth.

OSMAN. Was it to me,
Abdallah, thou wast speaking?

ABD. Ay, I wanted
To hear how 't is with Saladin—if hope—

OSMAN. Hope is a creature that has many tongues,
Just like a flatterer. Hope, Abdallah, yes;
There 's always hope at court, and flatterers too;
She is at home there, and a cheating wench
She mostly proves. Abdallah, you have wooed her
A fine long while.

ABD. How canst thou joke, my Osman,
Is Saladin recovering? May we hope?

OSMAN. O yes, yes.

ABD. I 'm rejoic'd. Long be thy life,
Sultan, a joy to thee, and to the world.

OSMAN. Ay, to the world, say I, for to the world
Both you and I belong. But if this lasts,

There 'll not be much joy left for you and me,
Out of these works of mercy, as they call them.
So long as Saladin is in good health,
He thinks, as every prudent man should think,
That he ought not be waited on for nothing,
To whom so many heads are tributable.
Then purses fly about; a mamaluke
Is a brave fellow; but now boney Death
Comes griesly stalking on his fleshless shanks,
And thrusts his sallow face and empty sockets
Close to the Sultan's pillow, what ado!
There 's such a running to and fro, such spending
Of sums and sums; but not upon us, no—
Who, think you, gets it?

ABD. Why, no doubt, the poor.

OSMAN. Ay squander'd upon beggars. These good people
Are to pray down from heaven, the Lord knows what,
Health and long life; and thus the treasury empties,
And we have nothing left.

ABD. You are too bitter,
My Osman.

OSMAN. I?

ABD. Somewhat ungrateful too.

OSMAN. Ungrateful, I? Dost recollect, Abdallah,
On what occasion 't was I broke this limb?

ABD. Could Saladin then help it, that I got
Hither before thee, that thou wast ill-mounted?
Sure such a caravan deserv'd at least
The best horse in thy stable.

OSMAN. Did I not
Merit a recompense as well as you?
I fell, and almost broke my neck; for which
You had the purses, I a broken leg;
And hardly half the earnings: your gift too—
I am vastly thankful for Abdallah's bounty.
He knows his game. This generosity
The generous Saladin repaid you double.
'T is fit such noble actions be rewarded,
Thou parasite!

ABD. Be not unjust, my Osman,
The sultan's pity surely was worth more
To you than twenty purses?
OSMAN. That 's a coin
I know not how to change—his pity, psha!
Deeply obliged, indeed, most noble sultan,
Thy purses give to beggars! Before long,
Things will go otherwise.
ABD. Go otherwise—
And is there then no hope?
OSMAN. Go, ask of them,
Smooth-worded as thyself, dissembling pick-purse,
And they will give thee hope. Why should they not?
Wouldst thou not hope, if in his place?
ABD. Yes, churl,
Hope to awake once more, unless—
OSMAN. Unless—
ABD. Some Osman watch'd too long beside my couch.
OSMAN. And when he is awake, will he not hope?
ABD. Yes, oft to fall asleep, and wake again—
OSMAN. And enough too.
ABD. Be plain for once, speak out.
Are there good grounds for still indulging hope?
OSMAN. And is hope ever groundless? Grounds of hope
Lie in ourselves, and in futurity.
All is the slave of change. What is, decays;
What was not, starts to being. He has not
Been always the great Saladin; nor will he
Always remain so. He was once—
ABD. Was what?
OSMAN. Thou sly smooth courtier, ask me yet again,
And with that air of innocence, who knowst
Better than I. Go to Nureddin's tomb;
There ask the dead what Saladin once was,
A servant like ourselves; unthankful, false
Beyond ourselves. Have I with robber-hand
Torn from his heir, who lifted me from dust,
His father's kingdom? I with perjur'd smile

Sent in the bloom of life the noble youth
In sorrow to the ashes of his sires?
Have I, or Saladin?
ABD. What was is past.
Let us not make th' amended man a sinner.
'T is true he came by conquest to the empire.
OSMAN. Conquest! a pretty word for thieves of rank,
A courteous gentle word, I thank the inventer.
ABD. How justly, nobly, mercifully, he
Has rul'd the empire, which his prudent courage
And hero-virtues won!
OSMAN. For otherwise
He would have rul'd it very little while.
The worse a thing has been obtain'd, the better
It must be us'd, if in resentment's bosom
The fire is to go out, and the yok'd slave
To bear, and not to cast off force, by force.
ABD. You err, my Osman, surely. What compell'd
Him to be good, whom no law overhung
But his own heart; him, whom no punishment,
No judge o'eraw'd.
OSMAN. Him fear could overawe.
Who has forgot e'en yet Nureddin's virtue?
Set up a thief next to a righteous man,
And he will also learn to play the righteous,
And veil his robbery with some shining deeds,
Which pass for virtue. Then the world begins
To praise the worthy man; that flatters him;
He must preserve his name; he can't go back;
And thus becomes the hero that he acted.
ABD. It is enough for me that he is such.
Show me the man, who decorates a throne
Like him; who so protects the rich by justice,
Opens the hand of bounty to the poor.
OSMAN. Ay, ay, give me the world; and, by my beard,
I 'll give thee Ægypt. I should buy it cheap!
Thou hast good cause to praise him. I like dogs,
Who bring the hares, they catch, to me.
ABD. Am I

The only one, whose hand he fills, and were it
Not gross ingratitude—
OSMAN. To speak thy thoughts?
Yes 't were ingratitude, 't were blasphemy!
Thou 'rt a brave spaniel. When his death sets free
Yon flatterers' tongues; good night, ingratitude,
And Saladin. Then, if we meet, Abdallah—
ABD. Thou 'rt sharp, friend Osman, but indeed his death
Will draw great changes after 't thro' the empire.
We shall have need of unanimity
Above all else; if we are left to deal with
Those herds of christians, imams, jews, who 're ever
Stretching the hand upon the public helm.
'T is true they do get gold enough, but still
A man of brains is not content with that,
He must have influence, and thereof, my Osman—
OSMAN. Influence? let fools fight for unsolid food!
Affluence for me. They, that can most bestow,
Command my service. Fare thee well, Abdallah. [*Goes.*
ABD. Thee too, friend Osman. A good steady block!
We 'll lay him by for future winter-evenings,
When the sun shines no longer. Fools, fools, fools,
The world is not so sorry as you think it,
But sleight there needs to turn it to account.—
These are the jailers, who secure your virtue,
Ye Saladins, 't were else a slippery jade.
Were it not for us wise ones, who stand by
Bowing and scraping, comforting and praising,
But pointing now and then your trembling looks
Athwart the grate, where awful stands without
Truth in her panoply, her sabre bare,
And then most civilly withdraw, and leave you
To make your own reflections. Prudent men
Know to make use of all things, even truth,
And even monks. Come, my good monk, for thee
We 'll find employment, we have long desir'd
Some such a tool. Ha! Nathan, hush! perhaps
He too shall work our will.
[*Nathan enters, Abdallah goes toward him.*

Sincerely welcome,
My dearest Nathan, to the sultan too
Thou surely wilt be welcome; for a friend,
A bosom-friend like thee, is to the sick
More than ten Galens, arm'd with all the virtues
Of healing nature.

NATH. Yes, at times, Abdallah,
When the still tear of sympathy is needed.

ABD. Who does not need, who does not value that?

NATH. Those who for truth and friendship have no soul
Often prefer the flatterer to the friend.

ABD. How true; but surely with our Saladin
That 's not the case. Who can have known him better
Than Nathan, and whom does he value more?

NATH. No doubt the better man. Tell me, Abdallah,
Is Saladin composed? I hear he is fearful
He has not long to live. Of such a man
How irreplaceable would be the loss
To all! Do the physicians augur better?

ABD. They seem to speak with more alarm than hope,
Still there 's no trusting what such people say.
They have to make a merit of their aid,
And personate the saviours of their country.
All is important that approaches greatness,
And fortune often wins the praise of wisdom.
For wisdom, Nathan, is a gift divine;
But fortune, fortune—thou canst understand me.

NATH. Yes, fortune often errs, and daily makes,
Stead of the sage, a vizier of the fool.

ABD. Most truly spoken, else would many a ——
[*Saladin talks in his sleep with energy.*

SAL. Ah!
God and his prophet!

NATH. What is that? go quick.

ABD. *having undrawn the sultan's curtain.*
He 's still asleep: but horror and amazement
Lour on his griesly-writhen features. Oh!
Nathan, I hope my fears deceive me, but
It seems the inkling of approaching death.

NATH. Of death, Abdallah? 't is a fever-dream,
No more. The fancy heated by disease
Conjures wild shapes of fear and horror up,
Sometimes of hope.
ABD. But I, I have my fears.
The monk, the monk, we know the brood—
NATH. The monk?
What do you mean, Abdallah?
ABD. It may be
That treachery lurks behind—
NATH. How? treachery! how?
ABD. The patriarch, thou know'st the patriarch!
NATH. And what of him.
ABD. At least I think he might
Let the poor sultan die in peace. It is not
Worth while to be the murderer of the dying.
NATH. Does he intend it?
ABD. I, I have my fears—
Such vipers one can't be too cautious of,
Particularly now. The sultan thinks
That he shall die, and is so strongly anxious
For longer life. Good men are full of trust:
And Saladin, as thou well know'st, trusts all
Upon whose front Hell with his blackest seal
Has not impress'd in undeceiving lines
Treason and murder. Am I in the right?
NATH. Hell's blackest brand is stamp'd upon the heart.
The thief thinks all men thieves; the murderer, murderers;
So conscience stains the glass the soul looks thro'.
Who disbelieves in virtue, he has none.
ABD. In virtue, aye: but, but in patriarchs—
In monks—must we believe in them, my Nathan?
NATH. In men we must believe: it is the hood
That makes the monk, the heart that makes the man.
ABD. And if the heart be hollow—
SAL. Nathan, Nathan.
ABD. He calls thee.
NATH. Is he wak'd?
ABD. No.

NATH. And he nam'd me?
ABD. Yes, in his sleep. The sweat stands on his brow:
So anxiously he slumbers.
NATH. Let us wake him.
ABD. He chose to sleep. But I must tell thee, Nathan,
The monk dwells upon Libanon.
NATH. 'T is well;
He 's the less likely to mean ill to th' sultan.
ABD. Hear me; he now is here.
NATH. Indeed!
ABD. And comes
I' th' name of all the christians in Jerusalem.
NATH. And is—
ABD. To cure the sultan, so he says,
To give him health, and force, and life, anew.
NATH. Good, good!
ABD. All with the help of God, he says,
For he 's a monk all over.
NATH. On this merely
Thy fears are grounded?
ABD. He has very lately
Been at Jerusalem, where, it was said,
That Saladin was dying. He is famous
For knowing efficacious plants. The christians
Have, out of gratitude for Saladin's
Protecting sway, sent hither this same monk,
With many wishes for the sultan's life,
To be physician to him.
NATH. This tells well.
ABD. What, if instead of medicine he brings poison?
NATH. A loyal fervor prompts not treachery.
ABD. Thou know'st how very grudgingly the christians
Bow to the yoke of mussulmen; thou knowest
The patriarch's pride, the cunning of the monks,
The templars' perfidy, the foolish rage
Of all the Franks to get the sovereignty
Over Jerusalem—and now, a monk
Physician to the sultan.
NATH. True, Abdallah,

One should be cautious: and I must acknowledge
That the suspicion seems not altogether
Devoid of some pretence.
ABD. No, no, most surely;
If once this monstrous mass of empire, which
Was under Saladin a steadfast whole,
Proof against all assault, dissolv'd and crumbling
Could be attack'd.
NATH. Well—
ABD. Such has been the fate
Of all great empires conquer'd suddenly.
NATH. I understand thee.
ABD. Saladin, alas,
Trusts but too much the honesty of christians.
NATH. Perhaps, Abdallah, his own noble heart
And generosity is what he trusts in.
ABD. A monk physician to him too, a monk—
NATH. True.
ABD. Would it not be well if thou couldst mention
The danger he incurs, couldst hint it to him,
Before the monk surprises him?
NATH. But first
The sultan's sister should be made acquainted
With what has past—request her in my name—
SAL. God! God!
ABD. The sultan—
SAL. O how faint, how feeble.
ABD. Hail, and long life to Saladin.
SAL. Abdallah,
Come nigh and wipe my forehead. O how weary!
ABD. It seems as if thy slumbers were not tranquil,
Not so refreshing as we wish'd. Thy dreams
Have harrow'd off thy brow the peaceful smoothness,
Which sleep else gives the weary.
SAL. I have been
In other worlds—alas, how weak I feel!
Where light and darkness strove more horribly
Than life and death within my soul. Is Nathan
Come yet, Abdallah?

ABD. Yes, my Saladin.
SAL. Then let him enter.
[*Abdallah beckons Nathan, and retires.*
We are now, my Nathan,
Got to the frontier. Sit thee down, I pray;
Now I have slept, I hope to talk with thee
More calmly. Thou art sorrowful, my Nathan—
NATH. It grieves me, Saladin—
SAL. Yes, I believe thee;
But recollect it is the will of God,
And bow to it. Nathan, I have sent for thee
To give my breast once more the lost repose
Thy wisdom took away.
NATH. I? sultan, I?
From thee? O God forbid!
SAL. Or rather say
My own presumption, Nathan. O how direly
Has truth revenged upon me her importance.
It was at bottom but a sport of fancy,
A mere amusive levity; but really
Truth is too high to sport with, too important
To make a jest of—
NATH. I am anxious, sultan,
To understand precisely these allusions.
SAL. The ring, th' enchanted opal ring, whose glitter
Drew me into this maze. It was a tale,
That slid so unexpectedly, so gently,
Into my open and unguarded soul,
Shedding so much forbearance and humaneness
O'er my consenting heart; it seem'd to close
At once the mouth of each precipitate
Intolerant decider. O indeed
Some strength of mind is needful to withstand;
Particularly when, excuse me, Nathan,
The teacher has been first announced to us
From lips of praising thousands by the name
Of the wise man. I took it as thou gav'st it,
But little thought, O Nathan, that so soon
The judge's thousand thousand years for me

Would have an end. Now I must die. And then—
In this uncertainty, and with my ring
Alone, am summon'd up before the judge.—
O Nathan, how, if I have been deceiv'd?

NATH. And, sultan, how, if all have been deceiv'd?

SAL. There lies the sting; so would, for all his love,
Thy father be a cheat, have given for truth
To his own son, who languish'd after light
Mere error, Nathan: how can God, thy father,
Have given illusion, error, to mankind.

NATH. What if his creatures had not strength to bear
The purest rays of truth; what if illusion,
Or a faint morning-twilight upon earth,
Were for the human faculties, while here,
Their utmost scope; and on yon side the tomb
First the untemper'd noon of truth broke on us.
God leads us step by step unto perfection,
And many are the steps and shades of illusion
Between deep night and the broad day of truth.
Truth, what we call so, is but man's opinion,
The web of human pride, rash notions prated
To all-remembering credulity
By old tradition's tongue. Truth lies too deep
For our horizon far. God, God, is truth,
And man a thing that errs and fails.

SAL. Must err?
Must fail? if so; thou mayst have spoken falsely,
Mayst have taught error to me 'stead of truth.

NATH. I?

SAL. Thou, unless alone of all mankind,
Thou art excepted from the lot of man;
Unless thou only art th' infallible,
The wise. Ye sceptics, is there nothing true
But that we 're fools?

NATH. Be calm, have patience, sultan,
And take man as he is. What if he err,
Can't here below infallibly decide.
Earth is but earth; a dull and lightless body.

SAL. Ay, but the soul, my Nathan?

NATH. Be it light,
Or what you will, so long as night inwraps
This light; so long no tone, no ray, no image,
Comes to the soul, but thro' ear, eye, or nerves,
But what thro' flesh, or bone, or wand'ring juices,
According to the nature and arrangement
Of each material part, is modified
Into a thought for thee, and thee alone,
Which could not dwell another human soul,
So long must feelings, instincts, passions, form
Opinion; error be each mortal's lot,
And what seems truth to one, stand with another
For proven falsehood.
SAL. No, that goes too far;
Then would each image to himself in flower,
Sun, man, a different something; because each
Sees not with the same eyes. But do we, Nathan,
Not understand each other, although each
Hears with his own ears only? Language be
My pledge, that between man and truth at least
No such entire antipathy exists,
As thou maintainest. Many as our words,
So many commonly consented truths.
NATH. So many images by all acknowledged,
Which strike on one more strongly than another,
And irritate in different degrees
Our several passions. Tell me, Saladin,
Is passion, truth? vice, truth? is avarice,
Is tyranny, or sneaking murder, truth?
Or all of monstrous that the human wish
By images of sensuality
Is cheated into?
SAL. Nathan, O beware,
Least with thy wisdom thou impair thy virtue;
Little by little, one short footstep more,
And lo! we all are rogues, and must be rogues;
And my good worthy Nathan—no, to think it
Were blasphemy, were crime. Man, thy conclusions
Cannot be just; for if truth be illusion,

Then so is virtue. What sayest thou?
NATH. And is there
Aught more dependent upon chance than it?
It is the circumstances amid which
A lucky chance has plac'd thee, 't is the land
Allotted for thy country, 't is the men
With whom thou dwellest, 't is thy meat, thy drink,
Nay e'en the very air that bathes thy brow,
And above all the early bending given
To all thy tender forces, education,
Paternal prejudices, and the first thrust
With which fate hurls thee into life's career:
Hence is thy virtue, man! Soil, weather, climate,
These shape the tree.
SAL. The upshot comes of course;
We have at worst to die, and all is over:
Truth 's but a dream, virtue an accident.
Troth, Nathan, thou 'rt a sage indeed, and hast
Nearly philosophiz'd me into madness.
How! grows there not upon the self-same soil,
Beside the wholesome stem, the crooked dwarfling?
NATH. The fault perhaps was in the seed: perhaps
A grub, or an unheeded gust of wind,
Or any of the thousand little causes,
Whose action and reaction hold together
This goodly frame of things.
SAL. But, my good friend,
Man is not quite a block, a log of wood,
Obeying mere external laws. Is he
Chained to the earth he springs from? In the east
Is it too sultry for thy virtue, fly,
Go to the pole. If wine provoke thy blood,
Drink water: if thy neighbour, seek a better.
What curbs thy freedom does not therefore exclude it,
Else what were freedom?
NATH. A mere play of words,
A leading string, with which good easy man
Believes he strays alone, yet can't advance
Further than his conductress, Providence,

Permits. 'T is if you will a whirling car,
We boys get in, and shout to our companions
Proudly—"how fast we drive;" but round and round
Th' eternal measur'd circle of the world
We are but dragg'd.

SAL. Fie, Nathan, do not squander
Upon such tales, which thou thyself believ'st not,
Thy ready wit. Thou dost not talk in earnest;
For how couldst thou, who hast a thousand times
In life o'ercome those enemies of virtue,
The passions, and the cravings of our senses,
With one sword-stroke of reason—thus assert.
Thou art but seeking artfully to keep
Truth out of sight; but, Nathan, disputation
Is now no longer mine.

NATH. And would to God
It never had been, Saladin. The few
Worthy and noble souls should only act,
Live after truth, and leave true deeds behind them.
All disputation, if and what be truth,
Wastes the fair hours bestowed so sparingly
Upon the wanderer, who for his journey
Has not a day too much. The lazy man
May fling himself along beneath the shade,
And with his fellow weigh and ascertain
How far he has to go, is this the road,
Are you gone wrong—but let us with fresh strides
Haste to the goal; we then, I ween, shall know
How far it was, and if I have not chosen
The shortest road, my industry at least
Will have made up for many a round-about.

SAL. My pilgrimage is almost at an end;
But, friend, its goal I see not. Thou 'ast confused me.
Live after truth, say'st thou, and yet not know
What truth may be, nor even care to know it,
But trudge along hap-hazard, north or south.

NATH. Not much needs there of truth to be a man;
"There is a God; be pious, and fear him;
Trust he will crown thy virtue, scourge thy vice,"

That is enough.

SAL. And may we not inquire
What is this God, and how should we be pious,
How act to win his favor, how he scourges,
And how rewards, and when he punishes,
Whither the sinner goes——

NATH. Is there not
Water enough to cleanse with in Damascus?

SAL. No stream can cleanse the conscience of its sin,
No flame can purify the sullied heart,
Before the sight of God. How can I know
Whether, if God is just, to guilt a foe,
I too shall be forgiven. 'T is that, 't is that,
My Nathan, that which wounds me, which impels me
To make the dread inquiry now; and not, as once,
The idle love of disputation. Death
Itself is nothing, a mere step across
A narrow threshold; but a troubled moment,
And all is over. The intoxicated
Will dare the stride, and boldly spring avaunt,
Fare as he may without; but there 's no art
Can drug the conscience into bold delirium,
Seel to the night of death its wakeful eye,
And teach it at futurity to sport.
But, with a sober conscience, Nathan—

NATH. Sultan,
I would not flatter, but can God above
Be found less just, less gracious than thyself?

SAL. That is, not punish with severity,
But punish, if he 's master of the world.
What would become of kingdoms, if mankind
Might with impunity make sport of law,
Rob, murder—

NATH. If the law smites but the guilty,
What has the good to fear?

SAL. The good, ay he,
What should the good man fear? but criminals—

NATH. Abandon to the sentence of their judge,
And gaze rejoicing at the glorious harvest,

That ripens for the doings of the just
In better worlds. The more the soul below
Is veil'd in darkness, the more full of rapture
Must be the passage to the sunny day
Of shining truth. We here have yet to wander
Thro' many a labyrinth on this murky earth;
From thee the fetters drop, soon thy free soul
May hail yon clearer heaven, and eagle-wing'd
Soar to her God, th' eternal only source
Of light and truth. O might I follow, sultan,
God be thy guide!

SAL. *after some reflection.* No, no, that cannot be,
That were unsuitable, my lot is other.
Each talks but as he feels; thou canst not tell
How it is here with me. Just, pious, good,
Are lovely words; and happy who can speak them,
And feel no dagger digging at his breast.
Ah, Nathan, hast thou never stain'd thy life—
Not with one crime?

NATH. Oh, who is free from faults,
My dearest sultan, in the sight of God?
Pure, yet a man?—

SAL. Speak'st thou of faults, just man?
Away! Come not to sully thy white virtue
Beside a criminal! Off! dost thou know me?
Dost thou know Saladin?

NATH. Who knows him not?
The generous, the impartial, and the just,
The tolerant friend of man. Who knows him not,
The pious Saladin?

SAL. The robber too;
The bloodhound, Nathan, too; know'st thou not him,
Who has spill'd more of unoffending blood
Than thousand murderers, whom the sword of vengeance
Refus'd to spare, who to rapacious wishes,
To wild ambition, sacrific'd his duty,
His conscience, all!—Know'st thou not him?

NATH. No, sultan,
Him I know not.

SAL. God knows him.
NATH. As he knows
The chaos, from whose deep the light arose:
It does not therefore now exist. Thou art not
The first, whom he has imperceptibly
Allow'd thro' crimes to find out virtue's path.
What boots the *has been*, so the *is* be right?
God will not ask the just man's virtue to
Atone the sinner's trespass, will not punish
The worthy, for the faulty, Saladin.
SAL. Yet not unoften the amended man
Dies of his sins.
NATH. Dies of some law of nature.
SAL. What is this fear then? what this inward struggling?
These racking tortures of avenging conscience?
NATH. A proof of tenderer virtuous feelings, of
Abhorrence against vice; it is, perhaps,
The working of thy fever; of strain'd nerves
And hurried spirits.
SAL. 'T is no doubtful pang;
Obscure and undefin'd, but clear, perception
That I have not liv'd as a man should live;
It is the palpitation of a culprit
Advancing to his judge. Conscience, my Nathan,
Is no disease.
NATH. Strive not against thy peace,
Do not o'erlook thy virtues, shove not from thee
The consolations, which on penitence
God has bestow'd.
SAL. God! where has he bestow'd it?
How am I sure of that? And is not God
A friend to order? Values he no longer
The laws he made? No longer loves his creatures?
Who breaks thro' those, or sacrifices these,
Can God befriend? Indeed for men, like us,
Whom groping after truth but leaves bewilder'd,
Whom virtue fills with pride, or fills with doubt,
Faith is a precious thing. Beside the grave,
Where a man strays alone, where other souls

No longer buoy him up with fellow-feelings,
Where all is changing, and between to be
And not to be, the dread abyss is yawning,
Where all that seem'd in life truth, action, fact,
Dwines to a lie, where even reason's torch,
Amid the wide and vacant gulf, is quench'd,—
O Nathan, Nathan, faith is precious there.

NATH. Who takes it from thee, my good Saladin,
Why may'st thou not believe whate'er thou wilt?

SAL. No longer, Nathan, now; no longer now.

NATH. Does not thy prophet teach thee, like mine me,
That God is merciful, that he forgives?

SAL. Keep for thyself thy talismanic ring,
And do not mock at the poor trodden worm
E'en in the dust!

NATH. For God's sake, no, no, no;
Sultan, if with my blood I could procure thee
Rest, O how willingly!

SAL. Give, give conviction!
In certainty is plac'd the might of truth;
Doubt is its foe: a fatal grub, that bores
Deeper and deeper to the pith o' the root,
Until the fair flower sinks: yes, it is shrivel'd,
Faded for me, and round about me lie
The fallow petals scatter'd: all their power,
The fragrance they once shed across my soul,
Is gone. Then die, die Saladin! thy lot
Be heaven or hell, or everlasting nothing,
Die, die, for here 't is darkness all. Thy road
Is yonder, over graves—o'er slaughter-fields,
Thick sown with skulls of men—well moisten'd too
With human gore.—Who was the sower here?
Who with his sabre plough'd the reeking soil,
Who?

NATH. Saladin, what ails thee, Saladin?

SAL. I, I, 't was I, the valorous Saladin,
'T was I who mow'd these heaps of dead—

NATH. My sultan,
Do recollect thyself.

SAL. Ha! now I stand
In blood up to my girdle. 'T was well fought,
My warriors, nobly slaugter'd—Bury them,
For fear their God should see them, and revenge
On us their blood.
NATH. Dost thou know me no longer?
God God have pity on him!
SAL. What of pity?—
Behold in me the mighty Saladin,
The conqueror of the world. The east is his.
Down with your arms, or die!
NATH. Canst thou not know
Thy Nathan any longer?
SAL. Get thee gone.—
I will not deal with thee, jew, usurer, cheat;
Hence with thy ware, 't is trash! sell, sell to fools—
Avaunt! why dost thou weep? what wouldst thou have?
NATH. O this is horrible.
SAL. Ay horrible!
I did not kill them. Dost thou claim of me
Thy children?
NATH. God!
SAL. Do bury them still deeper;
Look, there peeps out a skull; in with it!
NATH. Oh
What a delirium this!
SAL. Up! up! we storm it—
Forward, my brothers, brisk, and down with them—
The dogs are yielding! On, on, we shall have it:
Mine is Jerusalem! Damascus mine!
Mine is all Syria!
NATH. Teach me, Lord, to think
That I must die.
SAL. What's all yon howling for?
Give quarter now; and offer up to God
A tenth of all the booty. There a mosk,
And here a school, and there an hospital
Shall be erected. We shall need them—

[*Sittah comes in.*

NATH. Sittah!
O my dear Sittah!
SAL. Will she not, she shall.
Will Richard not, he must—
SIT. What means this, Nathan?
NATH. Alas, thou hear'st thy brother is delirious.
SIT. My Saladin delirious? God!
SAL. Keep back—
Along this narrow foot-path climbs the way
Into the fortress. They are all asleep,
Hush! follow me in stillness, we shall manage
To take it by surprise—hush!
SIT. *also gently.* Saladin
Is for to-day too weary for new toil.
What if he would repose a little hour
Under the shade, and then with fresher strength
Assail the fortress?
SAL. Ay, I will, I will:
Keep watch upon your posts, my comrades all,
Least they should fall upon us.
SIT. We are going.
SAL. Mind, in an hour or so, I shall be waking.

ACT II.

SCENE.—A spacious Bower in the Palace-garden.

The MONK *and the* TEMPLAR *are sitting confidentially together on a bank of turf.*

MONK. Your father then is dead?
TEMP. At Askalon
He fell in battle.
MONK. And your sister?
TEMP. Her
Our father sent, shortly before his death,

To the jew Nathan, who has brought her up.
They had been friends, fast friends, such as there are
But few of.

MONK. He, I 'm told, is here at present.

TEMP. He cannot live without the maid, so fond
Of her he 's grown. Neither can Saladin
Live without him. This Nathan is, for all
His being a jew, a man of real worth.

MONK. The maid then will not have been ill brought up?

TEMP. Most excellently.

MONK, *trying to hide his tears, and in some embarrassment.* See, thou noble youth,
Thy history has so affected me,
That all which may concern thee is become
Most precious to my heart. God bless thy youth,
My dearest Assad!

TEMP. Thou good monk, my breast
To this thy friendship corresponds. Monks us'd not
To be my favourites; but, I don't know how,
I 'd scarsely seen thee, ere I learnt to love thee!
Thou art, I dare be sworn, not of those men
Who hide the wolf beneath sheep's clothing.

MONK, *aside.* That,
Good Assad, may have been—

TEMP. Let us thank heaven,
That among all conditions and all nations
Men may be found. Now, good old man, continue
To reconcile me to thy order. I
Admire thy venerable open aspect.

MONK. Then
So should my heart be likewise; with that feature
Nature the least plays false. And has the sister
The noble spirit of her brother? She
Doubtless was bred a jewess?

TEMP. Yes, good father,
But such a jewess; only see her once—

MONK. That I would gladly—

TEMP. I will bring her to thee,
Stay for us here. [*The Monk, alone, falls on his knees.*

I will. Down on the earth,
While yet my heart glows warm with gratitude
For blessings showered in fulness. O my God,
This rapture is too great; indeed thy servant
Is all unworthy of the good thou givest.
Praise, glory, and eternal thanks, to thee,
All-merciful, all-bounteous, be henceforth
My morning, evening sacrifice. And hast thou
Rais'd from his bed of dust this hapless clay
To see such hours—to pluck these blooms of joy
Before I die. When I forsook the world,
I vow'd to thee, no more for aught to seek,
That once this heart held dear. Mysterious heaven!
To what full fount of joy thy guiding hand
Has turn'd the weary pilgrim's narrow path,
Once more to quaff of, ere he sinks. O God!
But what are these weak thanks, what this lip-offering?
Does not the voice of every living thing
Praise thee in mountain, vale, and grove? Shall man
But lisp the echo of the mighty deeds,
Done by thy hand omnipotent on earth?
Lord, give me also force to be, like thee,
Good; and like thee, to love, to benefit,
Whate'er thou hast created. Soon perhaps
The evening comes: then let me labour now,
While yet 't is day: and be my faith a torch
To light me through the shadow, that in vain,
I may not have been ransom'd from the kingdom
Of darkness, to the kingdom of thy Son.
Him to acknowledge be my joy and duty;
Him by good deeds to honour my delight;
Through him be hallow'd, Lord, this day unto me.

[*Recha and the Templar entering.*

Rec. O Assad, that he were but not a monk!
To me these people now are so disgusting,
Who choose to wear their virtue uppermost,
On the outside, as if there were a risk
It should escape our notice. Hast not thou
Some such a feeling?

TEMP. Time was, when I had it;
REC. For if the inside be but what it ought,
What boots the cloak, the hood, the name? Without
All that 't will be discern'd.
TEMP. Yes.
REC. Then their vices,
Their malice—
TEMP. Have at all times injured more
Than serv'd the christian cause.
REC. Ay, or the world.
Work; spake the God who made us. To be good
At other's cost is imposition, sin.
TEMP. That 's true my Recha; but thy sentence ought not
To pass without exception. There may be,
Among the number, many a noble spirit;
Indeed in all large bodies there must be.
REC. According to my Daya's pious stories
They are all angels, saints, and wonder-workers,
By means of whose more than sufficient virtue
The sinner may be sav'd—the rich one namely.
Nathan once ask'd her, "My good Daya, tell me
How much of cloister-virtue would this purse
Purchase?" Since then she talks no more about it.
TEMP. 'T is so with all that 's more than duly prais'd.
The heart, which by a secret consciousness
Perceives the man at every step so clearly,
Uneasily believes in the assertion
That others can be gods. What are they then?—
What, answers Reason, mere men, like ourselves,
But a few shades at most better or worse,
While Passion, in her vengeance, still outstrips
The middle path, and hurls the angel headlong
Down into the abyss.
REC. True; and perhaps
The monk had never seem'd to me so odious,
Had not her over-weening praise provok'd
Resentful opposition.
TEMP. Therefore, Recha,

Let us be cautious: where excessive praise
Is shower'd by some, excessive blame by others,
We ought the rather look to find mankind
What on the average he is.
REC. And yet
This self-denial leagued with idleness—
The beggar's garment, with profound respect—
The world renounc'd, yet counsell'd—these are things
That hang not well together.
TEMP. So it seems.
Still, with this man, such contradictions dwell not.
He has not always been what he now is.
His garment hides perhaps his station, but
Not any vice most surely. He forsook not
The world before he knew it: nor despises
The good that it contains: nor does he sit,
For all his hoary head, in idleness
Still in his cell, nor lives he on his garb
And breviary. He 's useful to the world,
As a physician. Who can tell, but God
Have sent this man to save our Saladin
From death.
REC. O such be heaven's blessed will!
TEMP. Perhaps the time will come, when the monastic
Life shall be only evening-holiday
To the tir'd wretch, who long has dragg'd about
The load of life, a refuge to the sufferer,
An alm for really needy. Then indeed
'T would be a benefit, not a misfortune.
How often does the fainting pilgrim look
About him for the shade, beneath whose coolness
He may repose, and finds none. This perhaps
Was what our monk beneath his convent sought,
And found.
REC. Perhaps so; but where is he?
TEMP. Yonder
Within the arbour. Look how nobly pious,
In awful thinkings sunk.
REC. Come lead me to him.

TEMP. Here, my good monk, here is she, my dear Recha.

[*The Monk approaches them, and, toward the end of the scene, Abdallah.*

REC. Good father, thou wouldst save our Saladin—
May God reward thee for it!

MONK. I would, my daughter,
So it be his holy will, whose hand unlocks
The gates of life or death.

[*He takes her by the hand, and after regarding her closely, continues with emotion.* How blest would be
Thy father, who had to leave thee in thy childhood,
Were he now here, and held thee, like myself,
Thus by the hand. Dear girl—

REC. You knew my father?
Assad was telling me you did—

MONK. I knew him
Well, as myself; and we were friends, my daughter,
As close as soul and body.

REC. Ay!

MONK. Together,
We 've done some good, some not ignoble, deeds,
And he would thank me, if he liv'd, that now
A tear of joy, my child, upon thy hand
Dropt from me. O be glad, my darling children,
That one day ye again will find him yonder,
Where all good men, from every nation cull'd,
Shall meet before God's throne. Then 't will seem to you,
As if ye had already seen him once,
Here in this world.

REC. You do not know as yet
That I am not of his faith.

TEMP. O yes, he knows it.

REC. Then you must think, good father, that a jewess
Too in your paradise, may find a corner.
Do you think so in earnest?

MONK. A good jewess—
Why not?

REC. And you 're a christian, and a monk?
You christians are not over-bountiful,

In general, with your heaven, since holy Peter
Opens and shuts it.
MONK. On this very day
I would renounce my faith, in case the gospel
Denied to me this hope, this joy, this bliss:
If that which ought to teach the love of man,
Taught me such hate. No, Recha, holy Peter
Is not in fault, if men will thrust their brethren
Out into hell. He knew, that of each people,
Whoe'er acts right, and lives a godly life,
Pleases the Lord.
REC. Acts right—believes aright—
That is their phrase; and those who won't believe,
They extirpate, as though they were appointed,
By God the judge, vice-gerents. Men they are not,
But christians only.
MONK. Christians not; men only.
Men, rude untutor'd men, they are, my Recha,
And they profane what is most pure and holy,
To cloak their plundering murderous purposes.
They do not know what Jesus did, not know
What Jesus taught, and they believe in men,
And not in God, or in his son.
TEMP. I think so.
How many a one has at an army's head
As leader strutted proudly forth, whom Peter,
For all his cross, would not have reckon'd worthy
To loose his fetters from him. Judge not, sister,
The value of the doctrine by their actions,
Who only bear its name, and know but that,
And are by so much worse, because it lay
With them to have been better.
REC. Then by what?
How can a doctrine, if it leave the heart
So bad, be good? How can the source be pure
Whence flow such troubled waters?
TEMP. And why not?
If 't is a muddy channel which they flow through?
MONK. What have the prophets ever more complain'd of

Among the people, than idolatry?
Was Moses, therefore, an idolater?
Was Jesus, therefore, not the friend of man,
Because his noble purpose was mistaken?
And hast thou never drawn from this pure well,
My Recha, never read how Jesus liv'd,
And what he taught, and how he lov'd mankind,
How he built all upon the love of God,
That every heart with mutual love might glow.
Hast thou not read all this, my dearest Recha?

REC. Never. My Daya told me very little
Of him, but much about her saints. And reading
Is not to Nathan's taste. Experience,
And knowledge of mankind, he says, not books,
Give the right turn to minds.

MONK. O read it, read it,
And you will love him, Recha, truly love him.
The man, who glow'd with ardor so divine
To see his fellow-men all happy, who
To scatter blessings was so ready, who
Oppos'd himself precisely to the proud
Presumptuous nationality of spirit,
Seeking to gather with one pastoral staff
All nations, and the jews; that unto all,
One God should hearken, and one heaven expand.
Yes, thou wilt love him, to his virtues cling
With melting bosom, hang upon his step
With eager gladness, when he wanders round
Among his people, mighty as a god,
To teach and bless. And when the noble creature
Is taken in the toils, is dragg'd to death,
And dying prays for blessings on his murderers,
Then will my Recha press against his cross
Beside his mother, and will pour her tears,
And sadly turn to look if yet on earth
There dwell not some one like him, and find none.
Read it, my Recha.

REC. Really, my good monk,
You are impassioned for your hero.

MONK. Yes,
Most warmly. Who that knows him would deny it?
REC. 'T is very natural—thou art a christian.
Must I too not be like you? Must not Moses
Be unto me as dear, as Christ to you?
TEMP. There lies the knot, my friend; she is not as we—
How can she look on both with the same eyes
As we behold them. Moses is to her,
What Jesus is to us.
REC. If him your fathers,
Your teachers, bade you love; my father Nathan
Taught me to love the other. Whom believe?
MONK. The truth, my Recha. Read, and then decide.
To me my fathers taught not this belief,
No more than, unto Paul, Gamaliel,
Or unto the first christians, their forefathers.
TEMP. You were not born a christian?
MONK. Assad, no;
As little as thy father.
TEMP. And what then?
A moslem?
MONK. About that inquire no further.
Suffice it I am a christian; and thank God
He gave me to become so; and I would not
For all the good things of this world, not even
For life itself, exchange that happiness.
REC. But early prejudices cling as close
And as inseparably to our bosoms,
As to yon tree the early bent bestow'd
By the gardener's faithful hand. Can I renounce
What the wise Nathan taught to me for truth?
MONK. Why not?
REC. Believe, what he, as mere illusion,
Held out to me so strongly?
MONK. And why not,
When thy experience teaches something better?
Thy Nathan, Recha, now believes not half,
Of what his parents taught him, in his childhood.
REC. May-be in things of this world.

TEMP. Else in truth
He had not become the Wise.
MONK. Recha was saying
In things of this world, why of this alone?
Shall not a man, in subjects so important
As his own soul, his life, in that which teaches
To use the good things of this world with prudence,
And if they are taken from him, which exalts
His mind above things earthly, and assists him
To bear his sufferings cheerfully, by planting
Upon his grave the hope of future bliss;
In subjects such as these, shall man not learn?
Only in things of this world grow the wiser?
O read it.
REC. If what I believe be truth,
What boots the teacher whom I have it from,
Moses, or Christ, how can it signify?
MONK. Yes, very much.
REC. There spoke the monk, good father;
Thou art not now for shutting heaven against me,
Which thou so lovingly didst open?
MONK. No.
But hear me, Recha; when the needy man
Receives a boon, think'st thou the giver boots not,
Sultan, or emir, is it all one to him?
REC. No, not all one.
MONK. Why not?
REC. Because the one
Gives not, as gives the other. Who prefers not
Having a purse bestow'd him by the sultan,
To picking up a dinar of the emir's?
But what connection has that with my faith?
MONK. If Moses were the emir, Christ the sultan—
REC. Well—
TEMP. Would you rather relish to receive,
If so, the sultan's blessing, than the emir's?
REC. If so, I should: but what, if both of them
Were but the sultan's messengers?
MONK. E'en then

The prudent beggar at both doors would knock;
To him, who most bestows, give thanks the most,
And love him best. Go, ask of him, my daughter,
He will not send thee from the door unblest.
REC. But what would Moses say to that, good father?
MONK. Maid, is thy Moses envious? Would he not
Rejoice to find, that by his first instructions,
His pupil were become so sage and prudent,
As with advantage to intrust herself
To higher teachers?
REC. Sav'd the jewess may be;
Wherefore turn christian first?
MONK. And might we not
As brutes be happy, wherefore then be men?
Give answer to thyself.
REC. Why, because God
Has made us men.
MONK. Recha, is human nature
Not a kind gift of God, because he also
Lets grass grow in the wilderness for brutes?
REC. A gift most kind.
TEMP. Yes, and which claims of us
The warmest thanks?
MONK. In its own sphere each being,
So it has been ordain'd, can be made happy
By the incomprehensibly good father
Of all. But the more nigh you draw, in powers,
And in their tendency and fit employment,
In truth, in inward peace, and virtuous effort,
To the Creator, the more highly rises
Your own enjoyment. And this happiness,
My dearest children, is a gift of God,
Which, for the sake of his dear Son, who bore
The sins of all men, who, by his instruction
And his example, taught us, like to God,
To think and act, he on good men bestows
In part, on earth; above, in all its fulness.
REC. To good men—for the sake of his dear Son—
Why not to all, if he redeem'd them all?

MONK. Dear girl, behold how youth with all its charms
Has deck'd thee—how, with living bloom, thy cheeks—
REC. So courteous, all at once!
TEMP. Quite the young knight—
MONK. Hear me. A lovely form is not an empty
Hut, not a vacant hermitage; thou hast,
As I perceive, a soul too. Thou hast wit,
Hast understanding, cheerfulness, a precious
Present in life; and fortune has moreover
Not left thee unremember'd in her favors.
REC. Do all those in thy cloister argue thus?
TEMP. He has no doubt some gentle message. Monk,
Shorten these taking prologues, which already
Have disappointed many a girl's warm hopes:
Come to the point at once.
MONK. Do hearken to me.
With all this excellence, how happy were
The youth whom Recha chose. Thyself thou canst not
But feel how capable thou art of blessing.
TEMP. I too, I too, have felt it.
REC. Well, what further?
MONK. Yet canst thou therefore think, that every one,
In the enjoyment of these real goods,
Were alike happy; each without distinction—
REC. No.
MONK. Would his disappointment be your fault?
REC. Not mine.
MONK. And who would be least happy with you?
REC. He on whose breast the good thou findest in me
Made least impression.
TEMP. Truly said, my sister.
Thou wouldst be for the fool too clever—too
Cheerful for the morose—too beautiful
For envious jealousy: the prodigal
Would think thee poor; and every son of vice
Too pure, too perfect, Recha.
MONK. How can God then
Render the evil happy, like the good?
With all his loving-kindness, all the bliss

And all the joy and happiness of heaven.
How make the evil happy, like the good,
If still their evil bosoms doat on vice,
And cannot joy in good? Where there is sin,
There hell is, children.
REC. *kissing his hand.* O my worthy father,
Thou hast my heart. Thy cowl no longer seems
So horrible, now I have heard thee speak.
MONK. *weeping.* I thank thee, child.
TEMP. Well, Recha, was not all
I told you true?
REC. No word too much, my Assad;
Oh, what a comfort to the heart it is
To have been disappointed in its fears,
And find one good man more upon the earth,
Where they are scarse. Oh, if thy Jesus thought
As nobly as thyself—
MONK. As I, my daughter?
Do not blaspheme, nor take the feeble outline
Of a mere shade for the high Being's self—
As I? no, child—as God, as God, so nobly—
REC. How, then, shall I resist the fond temptation
To love this noble man?
MONK. Read, read, and love him;
Thy heart is worthy his.
TEMP. Here comes Abdallah.
ABD. The sultan is awake, and Sittah sends me
To seek thee, my good monk, that thou may'st see him.
MONK. Friend, I obey; meanwhile farewell, my children.
REC. Come, Assad, let 's go with him.
TEMP. 'T was my wish;
If you will take us also.
ABD. Holy man,
God prosper thee in this.
MONK. I thank you—come. [*They go.*
ABD. *alone.* How they all cling to him: and Sittah too
Is prepossest in his behalf, and even
The cautious Nathan. How his flattery wins
This giaour brood, these favourites of the sultan.

He seems to know his trade. The little jewess
Just now must kiss his hand—the monk, a jewess,
Charming! Who knows what lurks beneath a cowl—
Sometimes a pimp, a deep experienced stager,
Fit for a Nathan's, or a Sittah's purpose,
She has not else been wont to like the christians.
Would but the imam come—the lure is ready,
Thy muddy pate is just the thing for me,
A proper bulwark to conceal its man:
And when the breach is made, I warrant thee
To manage for myself a safe retreat.
Come, my good Imam, something more than common
Must spring of this—be bold, Abdallah, bold;
Show thou hast head-piece. Virtue—'t is a farce,
An empty name. To work one's own advantage
Is the true virtue—and with grace and smoothness
So to be virtuous, the true art of life.
Therein, Abdallah, if affairs one day
Should take the proper turn, display thyself
In all thy greatness. Such a man as thou art,
Cast off, put by, and for a jew too—ha!
Or for an imam—even for a monk,
This yet was wanting. A good natur'd man,
Like Saladin, who gives just as it comes,
Aiming by all this bustle of munificence
To bribe the world, is easily drawn in
By any snare: and be it so. Who knows
To what he may exalt this monk, in case
Their scheme succeeds. He would not be the first
Who from a dervis has been metamorphosed
Into a servant of the crown. A jew
His treasurer—well hit off—most admirably—
Go on then. Hush! be cautious! here 's the imam.
You are come to pay a visit to the sultan.

JEZ. I am, is he asleep still?

ABD. No: not now.

JEZ. Why, I was told so.

ABD. That I can believe—
Told so—to send thee gone, my dearest imam.

JEZ. To send me gone? me?—
ABD. Thy own self.
JEZ. Me? me?
That is not possible: you err, Abdallah—
The sultan must be sleeping.
ABD. When he wakes,
He will send for you: was not that their phrase?
JEZ. And very proper.
ABD. Proper or improper
Is not the question now, my reverend imam.
JEZ. What then?
ABD. What then!—does the monk think it proper?
He will send for you. That amuses me.
You may wait long before he wakes, my friend;
I question if he 'll be awake to-day.
JEZ. That 's a bad symptom, lethargy!
ABD. Yes, bad,
Imam, for you, ha! ha! for you, my grave one.
JEZ. Art laughing at me, mamaluke? take care;
A man of my condition does not bear
Such things quite coolly.
ABD. Ha! who would not laugh?
You are a pious honest man. I say
No more. Throughout all Syria 't is known
That in the law your equal is not found.
Not to distress your modesty, I say
No more.
JEZ. Abdallah, 't is our duty
To hear, as 't is to speak, the truth, at all times;
Even when it pains us.
ABD. So it is, my Jezid,
For self-denial is the crowning virtue.
JEZ. How is that meant? am I denying aught?
Truth should not be denied. You talk unclearly.
ABD. Oh, if you come to disputation, Jezid,
I must be off: for who would break a lance
In argument with Jezid? not Abdallah.
JEZ. So I should think; now laugh again, Abdallah.
ABD. No, not just now. Shall you succeed, do you think,

In curing Saladin?
JEZ. And is there aught
To blame in my prescription?
ABD. Not that I know.
JEZ. Then, fellow, hold your tongue; nor talk of things
You cannot understand. Talk of your sabre,
But not of science; leave such things to us.
ABD. Forgive.
JEZ. This fever can 't be vanquish'd quickly;
Disease so rooted needs a remedy
Of more than vulgar efficacy.
ABD. Yes,
My dearest imam, but not you, I fear,
Will have to administer.
JEZ. Who then? who then?
ABD. A monk, a christian monk.
JEZ. What do you mean?
Can you so underrate my science as—
ABD. I underrate your science, my good imam?
Who feels it, trusts it, more than your Abdallah?
Hippocrates and Galen, in my eyes,
Hardly deserve to weigh your drugs.
JEZ. Well, well,
What do you hint at then?
ABD. Be patient, patient—
It vexes me too.
JEZ. Vexes thee—what vexes?
ABD. To see such merit, and such science—
JEZ. What?
ABD. Mistaken, overlook'd, despised—
JEZ. By whom?
ABD. By Saladin, as it should seem, despised.
JEZ. The sultan despise Jezid—that is false.
ABD. Here comes a monk whom no one knows—
JEZ. For what?
ABD. Comes from Jerusalem—
JEZ. For what, I say?
ABD. This monk of Libanon, they call him, comes—
JEZ. Provoking man, do tell me what he comes for.

ABD. He 's a physician, and intends—
JEZ Intends?
ABD. To cure—
JEZ. Cure whom?
ABD. The sultan, Saladin:
Our own sick sultan: do you know him, imam?
JEZ. Cure him? cure him? and will he let himself
Be cur'd by such a one, a christian monk?
I scorn him. What can he know about curing?
Bring him to me, I 'll teach him how to cure;
Bring him to me.
ABD. He now is with the sultan.
JEZ. Who knows like me the changes of a fever,
The genus, symptoms, predisposing causes,
At the first glance, to class and to appretiate.
ABD. Oh, no one, no one.
JEZ. That is known, I think—
ABD. To the whole world.
JEZ. Yet Saladin—
ABD. So wont
To argue and dispute with his dear Jezid;
Who seem'd to play at chess with none so gladly
As his dear Jezid—
JEZ. Ay!
ABD. But times will alter.
JEZ. Go fetch him here, this monk, this hooded doctor.
ABD. Now?—he is with the sultan.
JEZ. No: thou liest,
Accursed mamaluke.
ABD. Look—here comes Nathan
And Sittah—(*aside* very opportunely)—now,
Enquire of them, and hear with your own ears,
If all are prejudiced in this monk's favor,
If your own fame for science still retains
Its rank at court, or has declin'd.
JEZ. I stifle:
The blood seems starting through my very eye-balls.—
A monk! a christian dog!
ABD. Be calm, my friend;

And curb awhile this honourable pride,
This fair ambition. Bear what can't be alter'd,
Display your natural forbearance, your
Command of temper, your inimitable
Disdain of envy.

JEZ. Lend me but a sword,
I 'd smite him in the presence of the sultan.

ABD. Hush! they are coming: let us in the arbour
Remain unseen; they will be talking of him,
I warrant you. Such is the expectation
To-day of the result of his prescriptions,
All mouths are full of him, there is not leisure,
Even at court, to ask what weather 't is.

[*Abdallah draws Jezid into the bower.*

SITTAH *and* NATHAN.

SIT. You really think so?

NATH. Sittah, I 've received
More than one letter from Jerusalem
Through trusty hands—an universal mourning
There seizes every heart; so much they feel
The sultan's worth; all pray but for his life.

SIT. God hearken to their prayers.

NATH. E'en the needy
Forgo their pressing wants, and give their alms
To needier still, that heaven may hear their prayers.

SIT. That is affecting! What proud monument,
What panegyric e'er in thy behalf,
O virtue, spoke so eloquently. But
What learn you of the monk?

NATH. He has done wonders,
Has not his equal.

SIT. Oh, should he but save him—

NATH. As to his heart, 't is good. To him too, christian,
Jew, mussulman, (firm as his own faith is)
Are weigh'd and valued at their real worth:
Where help is wanted, all are neighbours to him.
Unless requir'd to do so, he converses

Little about religion.

SIT. Acts the more.

I cannot fancy those, who make believing
In God and virtue, their pretext for spending
Superfluous breath a little decently.

NATH. And yet he seems to me a man, who never
Shuns any step, where virtue and where truth
Claim his support. My hopes in him are fervent.

SIT. How I rejoice that we have been relieved
From our mistrust.

NATH. My heart reproach'd me for it.

SIT. Yet thy precautions were but right.

NATH. May be.

'T is well to see and hear, and to examine,
Before one sits in judgement. That sly courtier,
As is the way of such, would fain have utter'd
Something important, not indifferent
To his advancement, his insinuations
Aim'd but at flattery—

SIT. That 's a wretched mirror
To real merit, Nathan; 't is the glass
Without the silvering. The imam too
Appears to me none of the best of men.

NATH. Still less so of physicians. I have wonder'd
How Saladin can bear him so perpetually.

SIT. Not from regard. By his proud forwardness,
And shameless zeal, he has contriv'd to acquire
The favor of the many; with the people
He has authority; and in a court
'T is pleasantest to fool away the time
With shallow fellows, easily seen through.
The sultan too is fond of disputation:
But who is willing to dispute with sultans:
The prudent man avoids it: and the flatterer
Lets him be right. Whom could he fix upon,
As laughable as is his stupid pride,
As troublesome as is his hasty anger,
Jezid is still the very man to amuse him.
The making choice of men is not the slightest
Of difficulties.

NATH. For the powerful.
SIT. Not long since, they were walking here together
More confidentially than usual. Sure
Abdallah must have need of him; for mostly
A civil irony is all he deigns
To waste upon the imam.
NATH. Not impossible!
Two well-match'd beings. Wind and water—yet
Likely enough to gender storms between them.
Perhaps without his remedies, the sultan
Might have been well by this time. A prim'd booby,
Who knows his dialectics all by heart,
And loves to puzzle; but with all his dulness
More dangerous than the other. Without men
Of that description, this Abdallah would not
Dare aught amiss; he must have bow-loops whence
To shoot in safety. I am much mistaken,
If the sly flatterer has not just been placing
An arrow from his quiver.
SIT. That may be;
But now the mark can be no longer hit.
Let us go in; 't is time for me to hear
If Saladin be sleeping—if awake,
Whether this sad delirium has return'd.
[*Abdallah and Jezid quit the bower.*
ABD. How fare you, Jezid? did I tell you fables?
You must have bath'd in praise.
JEZ. What! how! must I,
I hear all this, and from a jew, and bear it;
And from a woman too. Mark'd you the fellow?
Yes, he is damned, that jew! Oh, I could tear
His heart out of his body; such a brood
Of unbelieving dogs! I, a prim'd booby—
It boils. I 'll have revenge. I swear, I will—
As true as I am Jezid, that I vow you,
Jew, by the koran!
ABD. And what will you do?
JEZ. I? I?
ABD. Ay, you, my imam.

JEZ. I 'll—
ABD. Will what?
The understanding is a very calm
And patient husband; who soon walks away
When passion, his fierce wife, begins to storm,
Nor comes again till the noise ceases.
JEZ. I 'll—
ABD. So long as you are angry, I was saying,
Your understanding will be roaming forth,
And take no cognizance of what 's at home.
The sage is master of his passions.
JEZ. What!
Lessons to me—the imam?
ABD. Lessons, no:
Offers of humble aid in thy revenge.
To see a man, like you, so injur'd, scorn'd,
Pierces my very soul, a man like you.
JEZ. Injur'd and scorn'd—shall such a one as he
Scorn me unpunish'd? Speak it not again:
I have two fists.
ABD. Ay, so I see.
JEZ. I 'll show you.
ABD. Me, my brave imam? Let your injurers feel—
I could have counsell'd you.
JEZ. Do I need counsel?
ABD. How to avenge yourself; *(as if going)* remember this,
That once a friend was ready to advise you,
That to his love you then turn'd a deaf ear,
And if hereafter you should wish for one,—
May you look round in vain. Jezid, I am going,
Abandon thee to all this shame. Take vent,
And rage thyself to death. The monk will better
Know how to use advice.
JEZ. Who, who, the monk?
And wilt thou too desert to my worst foes,
Curst mamaluke?
ABD. Jezid—to thy worst foes;
Since thou hast not an ear for thy best friend,

Nor value for his counsel.

JEZ. What can that be?

ABD. I should have much to say, if you could listen.

JEZ. Well, let us hear.

ABD. A secret were ill lodged,
Where all is in such ferment. Fare thee well.

JEZ. *staying him.* Stay—let me hear; what shall I do?

ABD. Do? do?
You urge me then to speak?

JEZ. Ay, speak.

ABD. Beware,
Least this mad anger get the upperhand
Once more, and do not interject a word,
A syllable, between my sayings; else
I am off—

JEZ. Well, speak then; I am calm.

ABD. You have been scorn'd, despis'd.

JEZ. Would you insult me!
Don't I know that already?

ABD. Fare thee well.

JEZ. No, speak.

ABD. How should I? Yes or no—if not
It is all done with.

JEZ. Well.

ABD. Thou hast been injured—

JEZ. Granted.

ABD. And would have vengeance?

JEZ. Yes!

ABD. On whom?

JEZ. Is that a question?

ABD. Briefly say on whom.

JEZ. On Sittah, on the jew.

ABD. How?

JEZ. How, I know not.

ABD. Then hear: in their own net they might be caught.

JEZ. In their own net—where 's that?

ABD. That is—the monk,
And his high-vaunted cure.

JEZ. Catch them in that?

I understand thee not.

ABD. Well, then, be told—

How, if he thought of poisoning the sultan?

JEZ. 'T would serve him right.

ABD. But that he is not plotting.

JEZ. You think him—not a monk?

ABD. He is too honest.

JEZ. Who knows all that?

ABD. Whoever knows mankind.

But what if he could now be brought to own

That, 'stead of medicine, he had given poison—

JEZ. I do not see—

ABD. Hush, Jezid, some one comes;

Withdraw with me, and hear the plan I 've form'd. [*Go.*

SALADIN, *borne on a Palanquin*, SITTAH, NATHAN, *and afterwards the* MONK.

SAL. Now set me down awhile. Oh, how much freeer

The heart feels here! 'T is a delight to breathe,

Amid the open lofty halls of nature,

An air so fresh and strengthening. How reviving

Is the whole prospect round! Green, full of life,

All things about us breathing joy and love!

And this magnificently vaulted sky,

So clear and blue, immeasurable, where

No eye can penetrate, yet none discern

A dark and frightful deep, a gloomy chasm.

There too dwells joy, and future bliss for man,

Tho' what he gazes on be yet unknown.

'T is from that very deep that blazes forth

The light, which serves to show his present way

To the poor earthly pilgrim. Sittah, see,

'T is from that deep the light flows on us mortals.

Know'st thou how far 't is thither, to the source

Whence, through the mighty space of God's creations,

The glowing stream of life expands, and pours

Bliss into our faint bosoms?

SIT. Who can tell,

My Saladin, it is enough for us
That we behold it.
SAL. Soon perhaps, my Sittah,
My dearest Sittah, I from yonder sun
With boundless and delighted glance shall look
Down on this bower, and see my Sittah stray there
And weep there for her friend who fell asleep.
Weep not too much for me, my dearest sister,
When by the brooks of paradise, beneath
Groves redolent of ever-blooming spring
Thy faithful Saladin shall wander with
Daughters of immortality, and from
The silver source of life eternal quaff
Fulness of joy. No, Sittah, trouble not
The bliss I then shall taste with tears like these.
To-day I am otherwise than yesterday.
NATH. Thanks to the God, who gives thee comfort, sultan.
SAL. Yes, thanks to him, pure thanks. How well I feel;
Now I shall meet the tomb, and meet the judge,
With willing soul. I saw him smile, and look
Forgiveness on the outcast. No; life, life,
With all its blessings, is a very nothing
To that blest look of pardon, which infuses
Into the weary soul of the poor sinner
Eternal consolation. No, my dear ones,
Life weigh'd with this is nothing. I must tell you
How blest a vision I beheld while sleeping.
NATH. If speaking will not flurry you too much,
As it did yesterday.
SIT. Do spare yourself,
My best one; you, perhaps, are not aware
That you grew half delirious with talking.
It frighten'd us most dreadfully, my brother,
Be calm, for God's sake!
SAL. That I shall, my sister,
And that I may be so, I must be heard;
For joy needs sympathy no less than grief,
Else it oppresses. Oh, I went through griesly

And fearful scenes, whose very recollection
Shatters my soul into the grave.
SIT. I pray thee
Load not thy heart and ours again.
SAL. No, no,
Let me but speak. Enough, I died.—It felt
So cool within the grave, so still and calm—
No voice of friend or kindred there was heard,
And every power, at pause in empty space,
Kept the dread sabbath of the dead. At rest
Was nature's every pulse, and darkness all.
At once, as lightning flashes, 't was uptorn!—
I liv'd.—I swam amid a thousand suns,
Saw all, saw nothing—God, how felt I there!
The portals of Kaaba roll'd asunder.
A frowning form, whose bare arm streak'd with blood,
Brandish'd a warrior's sword, whose eye glar'd wrath,
Whose left hand, wide across the nations stretch'd,
Upheld large leaves unrolling: fierce he stood
A conqueror's ghost—around him corse-strown fields
In endless desolation. On my face
I fell and pray'd: "God, to us both be gracious,
To him and me, both of us have spilled blood."
But, when I rose again, the dream was gone,
And a huge mountain was uprais'd before me,
Whose summit storms involv'd, and lightnings flash'd
Through the dense smoak. A man, his visage shining,
As came he from the presence of the Almighty,
Stepp'd through the thundering clouds, on his right arm
The tables of the law—thy Moses, Nathan.
NATH. Ay—I perceive it.
SAL. Then methought I kneel'd
And pray'd: "Have pity on me, man of God;"
When lo! the glory on his forehead vanish'd,
I saw but the mere man. Canst thou, said he,
With blood of sacrifices wash out sin?
"No, Moses, no: not animals I slay'd,
But men, who were my brethren, living men."
Then fled this vision, and a lower hill

Lay stretch'd before me. On a cross there hung
A bleeding man in torture, nigh to death:
I look'd on him. No sin was in his face,
But patience under suffering, and much pity,
Much tender mercy there. He looked around,
As if he sought for men to take with him
Up to God's throne. And many came, all poor
And wretched sinners. And along with them
I flung myself upon the ground, quite melted
By his kind look, and I besought him: "Lord
Have pity too on me." O Sittah, Nathan,
How my soul felt! Toward me the dying man
Inclin'd his head, and mildly spake: "To-day
Thou too shalt be with me in paradise."
Like God's creative breath it swell'd my heart,
My pall'd and languid heart, with novel life.
I woke, and felt new made. To-day, to-day,
Still rings within my ear. Who knows ere night
What yet may come to pass.

NATH. 'T is but a dream,
My sultan.

SAL. But a dream more dear to me
Than all the wisdom of the world besides.
Let me dream on, don't make my joy to water,
I am not perhaps the first who, when he sleeps,
Thinks soundest. Who shall to eternal love
Prescribe the way in which to comfort man?
He best must understand the road to the heart,
Surely, who made it. While we are broad awake,
We may dispute ourselves to fools, and then
A dream can set all right again. Be proud
Of thy vain wisdom, man—and die!

SIT. But wherefore
Talk so repeatedly of death, my brother,
You must not die.

SAL. To-day, to-day! No longer
Is the thought drest in terror. Have I not
Already once been dying? While we live,
Let us however think of doing good.

Don't spare the treasure—it is plunder'd wealth—
While it lasts, give—the best end it can come to—
And when I die, display my shroud to the people,
And say: " Behold what Saladin retains
Of all his conquests!"
SIT. *beckoning the monk, who appears in the distance.*
God forbid thy Sittah
Should ever have any such monument
To build up to thy virtues! Now, my brother,
Be thoughtful of thy life. Behold the man,
Whom God perhaps has sent for thy salvation.
SAL. Come nearer, friend, you are welcome; take my thanks,
Both to your people and yourself.
MONK. I bring thee,
Sultan, from them a thousand prayers and wishes
For thy long life, and thanks—
SAL. To me from them!
MONK. Thanks well deserv'd.
SAL. That I have been no tiger,
Have been a man; and, if they paid me tribute,
Left them their lives—that often in a day
I 've squander'd more in indiscriminate bounty
Than might have gladden'd thousands for a year.
MONK. Accept instead of thanks, thou worthy man,
These tears, and long long live to bless thy people.
SAL. That rests with God. What think you, friend,
Of my complaint? Have not my friends inform'd you?—
MONK. *feels his pulse.* Yes: but I wish myself to ascertain
The fever's violence.
SAL. *while offering his wrist.* Here—how is it now?
MONK. How? tolerable!
SAL. So it feels to me.
MONK. That this good hour may not be lost, allow
Me to retire awhile.
SAL. Go then, my friend.
MONK. The sun is climbing—'t would be well perhaps
To pass back to your chamber.
SAL. *to the palanquin-bearers.* Take me back.

ACT III.

SCENE.—Saladin's Sick-room.

SALADIN, SITTAH, RECHA, *and* ABDALLAH.

SAL. The man delights me, children; he is no prater,
Nor fuller of his promise than performance:
His draught has been instilling a new life
Thro' all my frame.
REC. Most certainly, if he
Knows but as well to work upon the body
As he does on the heart, he 'll put to flight
Grim Death and all his host.
SIT. The heart, my Recha,
Can he speak to the heart?
REC. Most potently.
SAL. And is a monk, an aged monk? Why, girl,
Lurks waggery beneath his cowl?
ABD. *taking Sittah aside.* One word—
[*After a short conversation, he withdraws.*
REC. Nay, understand me, sultan, I myself
Put him upon it.
SAL. Fie! that is not pretty;
Recha in love, and not to mention it.
We could have help'd her to a husband, surely.
REC. If I had a mind to this one, could you?
SAL. No:
And therefore do not be giddy.
REC. My kind sultan,
I can 't deny it; I do really love him.
SIT. Impossible, my Recha; I was fancying
This monk is weak of wit—a fond old man.
SAL. Who, Sittah?
SIT. Then Abdallah has been saying—

REC. What was he telling you?
SIT. That he was sure
This monk is but a go-between, a—
SAL. What?
SIT. That Recha kist his hands.
SAL. How, how has Recha—
REC. Oh, 't is all true, I love him from my heart;
And still more yon, whom he believes in. He
Describ'd him to me in so fair a light,
Drew him so amiable, as the wooer
Would paint his object to the maiden's heart.
So much truth shone thro' each expression: such
Unacted warmth of feeling glow'd his lips:
That, while he spake, I could not have forborne
To kiss his hand for it.
SAL. *pleased.* My dearest Recha,
God pardon thee the sin! Why play upon us
Thus? It was then of christianity
You were conversing?
REC. Sultan, yes: but not
With that proud violence and angry zeal,
Fit to take heaven by storm, as we are taught
To think these people come.
SIT. And Recha listen'd
So patiently the while; Recha who holds
Her faith so dear.
REC. E'en Sittah would have listen'd.
SAL. Do let him come; I fain would hear him too.
Go for him, daughter, bring him.
REC. And will Saladin
Allow us—
SAL. To be present? Yes, yes, go. [*Recha goes.*
SIT. I scarsely can help laughing at Abdallah.
SAL. He 's always so officious.
SIT. And mysterious,
As if he had miracles to tell us of.
SAL. Sheer malice.
SIT. For one cannot but perceive,
He is not friendly to the monk.

SAL. You think so.
SIT. Surely; and even he had very nearly
Outwitted Nathan.
SAL. Oh, I know him well;
A studied, practis'd, rascal, who conceals
Beneath the sugar of his flatteries
Nothing but poison. Mind his little eyes,
Lurking as if in ambush, never open,
Like thieves beneath the eyelids of the night
Crawling for shelter, least the glare of dawn
Should track their guilty steps, and stay their flight,
And drag them to the judgement-seat of day.
Askant, unsteady, never meeting you
Full in the black of the eye; I hate his looks.—
Then round about his mouth, those feverish, swift,
Convulsive, movements—'t is a villain's face,
[*The monk and Recha approach.*
But there behold simplicity and truth,
An honest countenance.
REC. Here, here he is.
SAL. *to the monk.* You are accus'd of having won this maid's
Affections, monk. By what forbidden arts,
What wicked witchcraft, who can say? She loves you,
Does she not?
MONK. So it seems—at least I wish it
Most earnestly, my sultan; for I love
Her as a daughter.
REC. I him, as a father.
My Conrade and thy Assad, sultan, also
Loves him not less: e'en Nathan is his friend.
SAL. And yet we have been told you are a seducer.
MONK. Thank God that Saladin is grown so cheerful—
I am fain to answer yes. I have endeavour'd,
So far as in me lay, to draw aside
Mankind from ways of sin; to win them over
To the pure love of him, who fills this bosom,
Is dearer to me than my very life.—
If you call this seduction, Saladin,

I must plead guilty.
SAL. That you must indeed:
But by what talisman?
MONK. O Sultan, ask not;
If you would punish using spells like mine,
On you first falls the penalty. I love you—
The heart that 's heartily given buys the heart,
And I have seldom found that talisman
Unable to evoke affection, where
The soul is uncorrupt.
SAL. But you are seeking
To draw them over to your faith, why that?
MONK. Because I love them.
SAL. Are the rest of us
Then to be damn'd? What say you?
MONK. Jesus Christ
Has no where taught me to decide on that;
God only knows who merits hell, and who
Is capable of heaven. To us expressly
It is forbid to judge—but not to love—
Love one another is the great behest.
SAL. How canst thou be quite certain of thy faith,
If I with mine may also hope for bliss?
MONK. Whether thy faith bestows pure bliss upon thee,
Enables thee to think of God with joy,
Strengthens and comforts thee in doing good,
Heals up the wounds of conscience, teaches thee
Calmly to wait for death, and furnishes
Firm ground of everlasting hope—not I,
Thou canst best feel—for know it no man can.
Meanwhile, although thy subjects be both rich
And happy, cannot Saladin be richer
And happier than they are? Infinite
Both here and yonder are the steps of bliss.
Where is truth measur'd out in equal portions?
Which are endow'd with equal powers to know
And use it? Where are there two several men,
Whose will and whose opinions coincide
Completely? Look on high and count the stars,

And say if any two display a disk
Of equal brightness: yet no one of them
Is wholly bald of light. 'T is a sad heaven
That 's built upon the woe of many millions.
SIT. Ay, a sad heaven indeed—to which I own
I don't aspire—a fairy iland, where
Spring for the dancing pleasures ever spreads
A flowery carpet, while around it watch
A thousand dragons, leopards, jealous-eyed,
And storms unending—where th' inhabitants
Daily behold along their coasts the corses
Of such as fain had landed on the shore,
Ship-wreck'd, or torn by monsters. Such a heaven;
No, my good monk, we are better off on earth.
MONK. You think exactly as all those must think,
Who scantly oversee the mighty plans
Of God. If he can make all happy, then
Most surely, Sittah, he will do it. We
Are bound to wish and hope it, and as far
As in us lies, to further this great end:
But to set limits to the judge's office,
To claim that he should ne'er condemn, transcends
A mortal's right.
SAL. *after pondering.* My friend, to speak the truth,
I think there 's contradiction in your speeches:
If your belief and mine are not the same,
Truth, monk—
MONK. Is not the invention of mankind;
But, like the other goods of life, a gift
Of God? On one man birth bestows the blessing,
And on another his own honest toil.
He who is born poor, who from his forefathers
Heirs empty chests, by dint of industry
May gradually fill them.
SIT. Very true.
MONK. May by exertion of his powers grow rich,
And being rich, grow mighty.
SIT. But the man
Who has not means, born amid rocks and deserts—

MONK. On him the sultan would take pity, nor
Require the tribute of a palace from
A cottage. Honest stewardship the judge
May well require, but nothing else, the talents
Himself distributed.
SAL. Then every doctrine
May be divine, and each religion—
MONK. Is
The situation to which God appoints us,
Which on our souls has stamp'd the earliest bent
To thought and action, not the steel, with which
The great Creator of all truth bestows
On the dead tinder of futurity,
The first live sparklet? Is the flame too faint,
Blow on it.
SAL. Yet the christian 's often worse
Than many a mussulman—than many a jew.
MONK. Add too—than many a heathen—so my teacher
Was wont himself to say.
SAL. How then?
MONK. Should this
Surprise? Oft times the poor man's single acre
Produces more than many a hide of land,
Which the rich man neglects, and thus becomes
A loser by his very wealth.
SAL. Does error
Then serve as well as truth? Are there no odds
'Tween light and darkness?
MONK. There is not a nation
Whose faith is wholly void of truth. Admit
There is a God—'t is ground enough to heed him:
The more this notion is evolv'd, the better
Is the religion.
SAL. What think you, my Sittah,
Speaks he the truth?
SIT. Much may be well objected;
If Jesus' doctrine be the only true one,
How can God suffer that so many err?
MONK. And is existence then no benefit,

Because so many perish in the blossom?
Is reason therefore not a gift of God,
Because so many nations live uncultur'd?
These are unfathomable depths to man,
As yet—still let us thank the giver—nor
Exclaim: "Why hast thou then not given us more?"

SIT. E'en you are not agreed precisely what
Is the right faith. Your teachers damn each other.
Is Christ then two-fold, greek and latin both,
And, like his followers, full of contradictions?
The romish church will anathematize
The greekish, this the other.

MONK. Is Mahomet
Persic and arabic? Must all abuse
Be charg'd upon the teacher? Not religion—
Man is herein to blame.

SIT. How should the layman
Decide where patriarchs are not agreed?

MONK. The countryman, dear Sittah, does not need
The reckoning of th' astronomer to know
When the sun sets or rises: he can read it
With his own eyes in nature's book. At dawn
He is awake to welcome its approach,
To drink its early beam, and when it sinks
He heeds the call, and also sinks to rest.
But the deep studied man who sleeps all day,
Dreams learnedly all night beside his lamp:
How should he know, unless from almanacks?
No wonder if their reckonings ill assort.
But little common sense is requisite
To feel what 's in a book, and what is not.

SIT. Yet from the earliest times the christians never
Have been united.

MONK. Such too commonly
Has been, alas! the lot of man. But seldom
Is there a hut so peaceful that it holds
Not one strife-stirrer.

SIT. Hast thou heard the tale
Of the three rings?

MONK. How could I pass a day
Here, and not learn it?
SIT. A bewitching tale,
Made for the court's meridian—I assure you
It forms an epocha.
SAL. Till superseded
By some new tale, which some new tongue will tell.
Such is the fashion of the polish'd world,
It likes a honeyed story, swallow'd smoothly,
Which does not stick i' the throat—leaves unassail'd
The understanding.
MONK. Understood aright,
And well digested.
SIT. Who, in all the world,
Can't comprehend a tale?
MONK. Those only, Sittah,
Who misconceive the purpose of the teller.
SIT. Is that not clear?
SAL. What is it then? let 's hear.
SIT. I am dull of apprehension, or it is:
" Believe, just as you like, no matter what."
That is the meaning, Saladin.
MONK. I honour
The teller of the story. For his sake
I wish his well-meant aim well understood.
His noble heart, his penetrating mind,
Surely meant not to teach that the rude heathen,
Before his idol reeking with the blood
Of human sacrifice, can be, or can become,
As blest as you and I. That Nathan meant not:
He only meant to teach us toleration,
Love for each other, and that all should learn
To bear like brethren with one another,
Who own one common father, whom one God
Created, one preserves, and one shall judge,
However different be their several creeds.
SAL. Well, Sittah, now what think you?
SIT. Where is Nathan?
He must know best.

SAL. Undoubtedly. But, friend,
It seems as if you thought of tales but lightly.
MONK. Far from it, sultan, e'en my teacher lov'd
That method of instruction much.
REC. Can't you too
Relate us one.
MONK. If 't were enough, my Recha,
To tell one in my homely cloister-guise,
Perhaps I could.
SAL. Begin without ado.
MONK. To the mere multitude of every nation,
Religion has in all times been a charm,
An amulet, which, without further trouble,
Gave to its owner an unquestion'd right
Here to God's favor, and to heaven hereafter.
'T was but a name, consisted in the idol,
The temple, nothing else. But to the wise,
His faith is nothing but the instrument
To his eternal happiness.
SIT. The tale;
Come, to the tale.
SAL. Give him his way, my Sittah.
MONK. 'T is with religion as with husbandry;
Since it began, things have much alter'd. First
Necessity, then art, then science, taught it.
The earliest man received immediately
From God's own hand the fruits of earth in Eden;
But this calm garden-life was not for man.
His senses, blunted by satiety,
His intellects in one unbroken train
Of pleasing contemplation grown enervate,
Fell from their pristine dignity.
REC. And would you
Not rather wander in the fragrant shades
Of paradise, than thorny wildernesses?
MONK. No, Recha; unremitting tides of pleasure
Draw after them presumption, sensuality,
And sloth of soul. It is for children only,
That have not learnt as yet to guide themselves,

To have the nurse or teacher always by.
When the first pair were grown to years of ripeness,
And learn'd to feel their powers, God drove them forth;
And, with the cherub's flaming sword, he singed
Their garden to a waste.
SIT. That 's history;
You seem, my friend, no adept at a tale.
[*Saladin motions him to go on.*
MONK. But the young world had not been launch'd abroad
Bereft of fruitful trees and nurturing plants,
The exiles tasted still the Maker's blessings,
Ate of his gifts without too hard a toil.
'T is true they had to seek, to try, compare,
Learn, what was wholesome. By and by mankind
Were multiplied, and what the teeming earth
Yielded unaskt, was not enough for all.
Now they began to plant, perhaps not what
Gave the best food, but what had pleas'd their sense,
Or grew most easily. Not long was each
Content to labour for himself: one seiz'd
His neighbour's hoard: then nations join'd
To plunder others, stroll'd abroad and seiz'd
Whate'er they met with, hovels, fields, and gods.
SAL. And with the gods religion too? ha, monk.
MONK. Thus could no people civilize. At length
Some arts were thought of, and one man invented
The spade: he show'd his nation how to dig
Their fields, and bank them in against intruders.
SAL. A service truly great to human kind
In such an age, but real patriots seldom
Reap the reward they earn. How was it here?
MONK. Us'd to another's goods, they much mistook
Th' inventer's purpose, prais'd, but us'd it not,
And thought they did his instrument great honor
By shrining it within a golden temple.
SAL. Man-like, in troth.
MONK. The land remain'd undug;
They made incursions over heathenish land,

And liv'd at times on feasts of sacrifice.
Yet here and there were found just men, who knew
To value the invention, who would labour
Instead of plundering, and who shortly show'd,
That by the mean of this scorn'd instrument,
The earth all rugged as its surface was,
Might become richly yielding. Still the toil,
The sweat of brow, was grudg'd. At length another
Thought on the subject still more deeply, and
Found out the plow.

SAL. And what became of him?

MONK. As oft befalls the wiser than their neighbours.
As far'd the very founder of my faith—
The spade, all feebly useful as it was,
Remain'd the nation's idol. They abus'd,
Blasphem'd, seiz'd, persecuted, and then slew,
The noble man. In short he soon became
The martyr of his art. Yet he bequeath'd
To some well-meaning men the fine invention,
Who sought, when he was gone, to spread its use
Thro' all the world. And many gladly learn'd.
The crops began to flourish mightily,
The land bore two-fold, and the hardest heath
Was conquer'd to fertility.

SAL. For long?

MONK. Soon industry gave place to vice and folly,
For some the instrument was still too slow,
They turn'd it topsy-turvy, gallop'd glibly
Athwart the field, and bawl'd triumphantly
To those who loiter'd long in deep-cut furrows,
" See we are ready." But the harvest came
And punish'd their presumption. Others plow'd
Too shallow ridges, and the weeds got up,
Stifling the better seed. Some evil-minded,
Drove with their plows into their neighbour's vineyard,
And cut the climbing pampers at the root.
Others, instead of using the invention,
Wish'd to invent themselves; they took the plow
To pieces, and began to calculate,

How such an instrument could so perform—
Thought of improvements, threw by this and that,
And join'd the rest afresh as each thought fit.
Then each began to vaunt his own new plow,
To hate his neighbour who gainsaid its praise,
And thus in quarrel fled the idle summer,
And the fields lay untill'd, the vineyards ruin'd,
And nothing of the plow remain'd in being,
But the mere iron.

SAL. What of that—the iron?

MONK. Here let me finish, sultan.

SAL. No; there wants
To Recha's Moses, to thy Jesus, yet
A third.

MONK. Whom thou knows't better, sure, than I.

SAL. No, speak! the iron—

MONK. At thy bidding then—
'T was found by a hot-headed man who thought
This thing is sharp, 't will hack and hew. He chang'd
The plough-share to a sword, and with it stroll'd
From land to land, and slew; and at each blow
Shouted aloud; Lo, fools, this is religion!

SAL. Ay, by Mahomet, thou hast spoken justly,
'T was so, I saw him yesternight in vision.

MONK, *feeling his pulse.* But we forget what fails thee.
Give me leave—
How is it with you, Sultan?

SAL. Better, better,
In soul and body. Hadst thou but come sooner—

MONK. Thank God, not me. He and not man confer'd
On plants their powers. I 'll make thee up a draught.
[*Goes.*

SAL. Do so, my friend, and then we 'll listen further.
[*The monk retires and Recha follows.*
What think you, Sittah, is not this a man?

SIT. He may be honest, brother, but for court
He 's not fil'd smooth enough; he 's not a Nathan,
Out of the way of truth, that 's in the way,
To hitch with prudent bows and scrapes, and leave

Those whom we move unjostled—this is not
The monk's acquirement.
SAL. And is smoothness, Sittah,
Always a virtue?
SIT. Call it as you will,
A quality, a knack, 't is to be wish'd for,
And wins the heart. And what can this man mean
By all his prate about religion? Be
Each what he is, and let his neighbour rest.
'T was hardly in good manners to blurt out
Before one's face.
SAL. What one is ask'd to say,
Why not, my Sittah; but our tickled ears
Get wont at court to treacherous flattery;
And truths, which it might profit us to hear,
Are husht least they should wound. Hence apes and liars
Swarm in a court. How should an honest man
Care for the favor which will grin a smile
On every knave? The open man speaks out
When patience listens: but where lies are welcome,
There truth is dumb, save when the smooth-tongued courtier
Laughs at the fond credulity he gulls.
SIT. If he but save thee, rude or smooth, I 'll love him,
His cowl shaln't scare away my gratitude.
SAL. Nathan is coming—I thought long to see you.
NATH. I 've done as you commanded, and exchang'd
Your precious things for money.
SAL. That is well,—
My capital once plac'd in worthy hands,
The interest boots not.
NATH. True; if so thy life
Were to be sav'd.
SAL. And any way, methinks,
I am much better since the monk prescribes.
NATH. God grant that no deception lurks behinds—
SAL. None can.
SIT. Has Nathan then ground to suspect?
NATH. A letter has been brought me—

SIT. Whence? I pray.
NATH. 'T is dated from Jerusalem, and hints—
SIT. What?
NATH. That this monk is the sly patriarch's friend,
Oft closeted with him, who 't is suspected
Has thoughts of hurrying Recha to a convent;
For he has news of all, and wanting force,
His malice uses cunning.
SAL. No such plots
Is the monk weaving: you well knew my Assad:
Don't you detect a strong resemblance to him
In this same monk?
NATH. In fact, I do remark it.
He looks an honest man; and yet, we know,
Appearance is deceitful, and he meddles
Somewhat too much with Recha. Yesterday
I saw her going with him to his cell.
SAL. So—that is half suspicious—and I know
She is strangely taken with this man.
SIT. And wishes
She had been long ago of his religion.
NATH. How?
SIT. She has told me that she loves his Christ
Still more than him; and yet on him she doats
As on a father. Conrade too is won.
NATH. He 's trying then to draw them to his faith?
SIT. He paints his hero to her, as she says,
More lovely than a wooer paints the bridegroom
To a coy virgin.
NATH. That 's in character
With these same cloister-brethren.
SAL. I could wish
I had not learnt all this. Here comes another
Of his good friends.
[*Abdallah enters, and speaks aside, eying Nathan.*
ABD. Bravo, he 's there—now let us ferret out
How this has operated.
SAL. Well, Abdallah,
Bring you good news?

ABD. Yes, very good indeed.
SIT. Out with it quickly.
ABD. News, that well deserves
A better fee, than were it a caravan
From Egypt.
SAL. Well, be short.
ABD. That Saladin
Is more than half recover'd. Is not that
Better than any caravan?
SIT. Oh, yes.
ABD. And yet 't is news for which we long had hop'd
With anxious tears in vain. Blest be the man
Whom God selected to preserve from death
Our valued sultan.
SIT. Says Abdallah that?
ABD. Yes.
SIT. Yet a while ago your words were other.
ABD. Forgive me. Men may err: especially
When the heart 's full, like mine, of anxious cares:
Then all excites suspicion: wiser men
By such appearances have been deceived.
NATH. To what appearances do you allude?
ABD. Trifles at bottom—now I know him better
They don't deserve the mention.
NATH. Can I learn them?
ABD. Why not? And yet I really feel asham'd
To have misconceiv'd so excellent a man.
SIT. Abdallah saw your Recha with the monk
In friendly converse, sitting 'neath a bower.
ABD. The sweet good creature! how should she not love
Whom every body loves.
NATH. Whence do you gather
That she must love him?
SIT. Oh, she kiss'd his hands.
ABD. 'T was that and nothing further. At a distance
I saw this passing—and I thought it odd,
For monks in general are not trustworthy,
And my full heart began its commentary.
A trifle seems important to the feelings

Of one, who prizes Saladin as I do.

NATH. And were they long together, and alone?

ABD. Alone I cannot say. I saw none else.
All this is natural. Curiosity
May lead a girl to listen to a monk.
Who knows what pretty stories of his cloister
Or of his faith he told. I 'll answer for it
'T was all well meant, and very innocent,
Whether he labour'd to recruit the faith,
Or the finances, of his monastery.
I trust the man. If of a thousand monks,
Nine hundred ninety nine be sly designing
Wheedling impostors—still may not the thousandth
Be good and honest?

SAL. Do you speak in earnest?

ABD. Yes, noble sultan; could this man already
Have won the love, the trust of the whole court,
If he did not deserve it? Though indeed
The general love, which, from the loyal bosom
Of all your faithful servants, pours to heaven
Its prayers for you, O sultan, does contribute
To fasten on this man, from whom it hopes
Fulfilment of its wish, the public favor.
Yet his kind nature, his benignant smile,
His winning eloquence, his feeling heart,
Deserve esteem from all. E'en the proud imam,
Though envy seem'd to arm that soul against him,
Now feels subdued.

NATH. The imam too his friend?

ABD. Yes, angry he had been and furiously;
But when he saw the monk, talked with the monk,
His anger cool'd, like the wild horse's shyness
When the known rider pats him. And he means,
With humble zeal, to company the monk
When he brings Saladin the promis'd potion.
Heaven give its blessing to the healing draught!

SAL. That 's strange indeed.

ABD. It is so. [*Osman enters.*

SAL. What brings Osman?

OSMAN. Here is a letter.
SAL. And from whom?
OSMAN. I know not.
SAL. Who brought it hither?
OSMAN. 'T was a courier pigeon.
SAL. It must be pressing surely. Give it me.
[*Osman delivers the letter to the sultan, and retires.*
ABD. God grant it brings good news.
[*While the sultan is reading the letter, which he communicates to Sittah, Abdallah converses with Nathan, without ceasing to observe the sultan.*
SAL. Go to the monk,
And tell him to await our further orders.
ABD. *aside.* Good, good, this works. Now we 've outwitted Nathan;
If there 's no fool on earth without his rival,
There 's no wise man whose prudence can't be matched.

SALADIN, SITTAH, *and* NATHAN.

SIT. *handing the letter to Nathan.*
For God's sake look at this, and sharply, Nathan;
All is not right, I fear.
SAL. I did not like it
When Nathan faulter'd in his good opinion.
That all these people are become his friends
Is more alarming still. Whom such men love
Can not be of the best. And now the letter.
I am puzzled: yet his countenance, his converse,
His unaffected calm behaviour, speak
Volumes in his behalf. He a deceiver!—
And of the blackest, most unprincipled—
A traitor, an assassin? No, no, no.
This fearless look, this free and noble carriage,
Alike remote from flattery or presumption,
A countenance where God has stamp'd the seal
Of virtue unmistakeably—were this
The mask of treachery—Satan is not black,
Nor hell in the abyss.

NATH. 'T is not incredible
That malice is at work against this man;
He is a stranger, is a christian monk,—
Grounds to be on one's guard against the courtiers.
SAL. True.
SIT. But the letter, Saladin, the letter.
NATH. Let us, if possible, impartially
Weigh what 's before us. Fear begets suspicion;
Suspicion, hatred; hatred prompts injustice.
SAL. Well said, my Nathan.
NATH. Is the writing clearly
Your father's hand?
SAL. Surely.
NATH. The seal too his?
SAL. Also.
NATH. Yet 't is not quite impossible
The seal and the hand-writing may be forg'd.
SAL. That would be villainy incomparable.
NATH. Less so than treason and assassination.
'T is fairer to suspect the smaller crime.
The greater any villainy, the slower
Should come the imputation. For my Recha
I fear less than before. Who knows but both
The letters have been fram'd by the same pen.
SIT. What if we yet once more conversed awhile
With Recha, and with Assad.
SAL. Ay, so be it,
Nathan, perhaps you 'll seek to bring them hither.
[*Nathan goes.*
Doubt, doubts, how cruelly you persecute me,
Ye foes to peace, to happiness, to virtue.
Firm faith, bold confidence in principle,
Is healing, both to body and to soul;
Where this is wanting stalks the foot of death.
Oh how my bosom throbs! my heart beats loud,
And every pulse is torment. Something awful
Hangs over us.
SIT. I tremble at thy trembling.
NATH. *returns.* The alarm is after all, without foundation,

What kills a man kills other animals,
The trial may be made with ease.
SIT. That 's true.
Oh do not harbour this solicitude,
If apprehension poison not your life,
It will not be the monk. They are returning,
Our cherished pair. [*Assad and Recha enter.*
REC. Impatient to be told
What Saladin commands.
SAL. I feel much weaker;
Nathan, do you speak for me?
NATH. *to Recha.* I am told
You 've confidential converse with this monk.
REC. I have, my father, and on that account
Hope not to be less worthy of thee. 'T was
Of old your maxim, that the company
Of a good man is the best school of virtue.
SAL. He is all that, my daughter.
NATH. 'T is our question
Whether he be so.
ASSAD. We 're not all in error;
Once you too felt he was.
NATH. Unless, my children,
He were the darkest traitor.
REC. Calumny!
Can Nathan so mistake the heart of man?
NATH. Whereby does Recha judge that he is worthy?
REC. Just as he bad me judge about his faith;
Recha, said he, do read it, and I read
And found it excellent. Behold the man,
Hear him, and in his sayings read his heart.
His thought and action is indeed a book
Of more than common tenour.
NATH. Why so eager
To intermeddle with religious points?
ASSAD. That must have been our fault, and not his own.
SIT. Were you then with our Recha in the bower?
ASSAD. Yes, Sittah.
NATH. Did Abdallah see you?

ASSAD. Yes.
He came to summons out the monk to the sultan,
Who was awake, he said, and asking for him;
But when we came 't was otherwise.
SAL. Abdallah
Is false, malicious. Did he not declare
He saw no one but Recha?
NATH. Yes indeed.
ASSAD. He saw us both together with the monk.
NATH. Has he said much about his cloister to you?
REC. Hardly a word. 'T was as my father's friend
That he addressed me, with such warm affection,
The burning tear-drop fell against his will
Upon my hand, which he was holding. How
Thy father will rejoice some future day
To meet thee at the footstool of God's throne,
As we are met to-day. I, who had never
Heard or thought thus of monks, was inly mov'd.
E'en when he dwelt on his warm love for Assad,
And of your care to rear his only daughter
As were she quite your own, his melting eyes
Were bath'd in tears, his heart so full of feeling
It choak'd the voice of utterance. Yonder, said he,
Will God, who recompenses all good deeds,
Reward the generous Nathan for all this.
NATH. And of his cloister, nothing?
REC. Not a word;
He is little in it; like his darling teacher,
He wanders much about to help the sufferer,
And to relieve the sick. For health and life
We cannot better thank the God who gives them,
He said, than to convey them to our brethren.
In youth, he was, he said, a warrior,
And not unskilful in that art: but once
Preserv'd almost by miracle from death,
He vow'd thenceforth to consecrate his being
To help his brother-men. O my dear girl,
How will the thanks of thousands climb to heaven,
If I preserve the sultan: 't were a bliss

To feel among the angels round God's throne.
NATH. What think you, Saladin?
SAL. He is truly pious.
SIT. If he is trustworthy.
REC. Pious—not trustworthy—
How should a man who loves his God, like him,
Be otherwise than kindmost to his fellows.
SAL. Not that he cannot.
NATH. I am quite convinced.
SAL. Then let him come again. I am now resolv'd.
Whoever 't is, the traitor shall be punish'd—
But let him come again, and tell him, children,
That Saladin feels weaker than before.

SALADIN *and* SITTAH.

SAL. Give me the letter.
SIT. No, my brother, no;
Forget it, it unhinges you too much.
SAL. Forget it! Can I? This calumnious letter
Written with viper's venom—Give it me,
It is my doom of death. I feel already
His cold hand reaching at me.
SIT. Here it is,
But I conjure you—
SAL. Read it once again;
We may perhaps discover—
SIT. I obey:
" My son, the anxious tidings of your sickness
Have bow'd me to the earth. Our God forbid
That I, long aged, should survive thy death."
SAL. Ay—my good father, but you 'll have to do it.
This is his loving tone. If there 's deception,
That, that at least, he wrote.
SIT. Is he still able?
SAL. He felt: I should have said. Go on, my Sittah.
SIT. " O could I but be near thee; I perhaps
Might somewhat ease thy mind."
SAL. And so he would.

And, if I die, it would be welcome to me
To breathe in grateful kiss upon his lips
My latest sigh—to thank him for his love,
His counsels, and his service.

SIT. "My dear son,
I felt alarm'd, when first I understood
That a bad man—the Monk of Libanon
He calls himself—was sent as a physician
By people in Jerusalem, to heal you.
If he has not yet minister'd unto you—
Not yet cut short the frail thread of your life—"

SAL. Thank God! he has not—but the letter may.

SIT. "If timely be my warning, trust him not,
There 's poison in his cup. May God preserve thee,
Thy faithful father."

SAL. Oh accursed hand,
Which dares employ the holy name of father
To veil the malice of its perfidy!—
Perish the traitor's hand, who thus abuses
The tenderest name that man can give to God.

SIT. The monk is coming.

SAL. God forgive my weakness,
In doubting for a moment one who loves me.

[*The monk brings a silver beaker in his hand: Nathan, Jezid, Abdallah, follow; and toward the close of the scene Osman comes in.*

SAL. *anxiously.* Welcome, good monk; we 've kept you waiting long,
But pressing business trod upon my leisure.

[*The monk feels the pulse of Saladin, with an expression of surprize and sorrow.*

MONK. May God be with us! Anxious were the cares
Which have to this degree increased your fever.

SIT. A painful message reached us from our father.

MONK. He is not dead—your father?

SIT. No, not that.

SAL. And do you know him?

MONK. Sultan, yes; and well.
God bless the good, kind-hearted, noble, man!

But 't is not now the time to talk about him,
We have to act. My sultan, Oh, be calm,
Your fever else may pass into delirium.

ABD. Come, my good father, help the sultan up.
That you physicians gentlier do, than we.

MONK. So be it.

[*He places the beaker on a side-table, and assists to raise Saladin. Meanwhile Jezid exchanges the beaker for another, and withdraws morosely from the apartment.*

MONK. How you tremble, my good sultan;
What ails you?

SAL. Ah!

MONK. Your paleness is excessive.

SAL. 'T is nothing.

MONK, *taking the beaker.* Where 's the draught?

SAL. Stay, stay, a little.
An instant will recruit me. Can a man
Of evil purpose wear this calm composure?
What hast thou in thy beaker? Give it me
If drugg'd for life or death.

MONK, *with intrepid but pitying expression.* 'T is the same mixture
You took before with good effect, but strengthen'd.

SAL. *taking the cup, and looking into it.* How oft within thy golden rim has joy
In hours of revelry leapt to my lips;
If now death lurks within thee—speak. No, no,
He 's silent—'t is not poison—I shall trust thee.

[*The Monk, rendered attentive by these words, looks pryingly into the cup, and snatches it hastily out of Saladin's hand.*

MONK. For God's sake, stop; it may be fatal to thee,
'T is not my mixture—may-be it is poison—
It effervesces, acts upon the metal—

ABD. *loud.* Assassination! treason!

OSMAN, *rushing in.* What has happen'd?

ABD. A secret murderer, poison!

SIT. Monk, beware.

How pale the sultan is.

MONK. Be calm, my sultan.

OSMAN *draws a sabre, and offers to kill the monk.*

Traitor, take this, and perish by my hand.

NATH. *preventing him.* Off, Osman, off!

SAL. And I command thee, Osman,
On pain of my deliberate anger, go.

MONK. What can I say? Here 's poison in my hand,
I brought it not—by God, I brought it not.

SAL. *giving him the letter.* Read this.

ABD. There stands this dark and shameless traitor,
As impurturbable—

NATH. No hasty charges.

SAL. Silence, Abdallah, not another word.

MONK. Our father wrote not this—but some foul foe.
I am betray'd, my sultan, and not you.
May but the poignard levell'd at my life
Not also bring some danger to your own.
I stand before my God—if 't is his will
He can clear up my conduct. I fear not
Investigation, nor your judgement, sultan.

NATH. Where is this Jezid? did not he come in?

MONK. Yes, Nathan.

ABD. Angrily he went away,
Because the sultan ne'er vouchsafed a look.

SAL. We must give further hearing to this case;
Meanwhile 't is fitting you be under guard.

[*Guards enter, and lead away the Monk. The scene closes.*

ACT IV.

SCENE.—A prison-tower.

ABDALLAH, *as on guard, is pacing to and fro before it, and sings.*

It was a friar of orders gray
Walkt forth to tell his beads—

ABD. Sit in your cage, my monk, and to the trees
Whistle the story of your martyrdom.—
'T was neatly done, Abdallah, worthy of you.—
We 'll one by one remove some other people,
Who stand between us and the highest place
In favor. Nathan must be shaken next;
He will be hankering after this same monk,
Consult his Urim, and decide to save him.
"No hasty charges." That was all his wit
Could then oppose to strong appearances.—
With time comes thought and opportunity.

ABDALLAH *and* JEZID.

ABD. Ah, my dear Jezid, whence so hastily?
JEZ. You are grown familiar on a sudden, sure;
How long have we been on such easy terms?
ABD. Since yesterday at least.
JEZ. Since yesterday?
ABD. You push the joke too far, Sir Consequence,
Had we been both twin-born, and suck'd together
At the same breast, we could not have been join'd
In closer links than just since yesterday.
JEZ. What links me to a rascal?

ABD. Well said, imam.
Rascality. There 's nothing in the world
Which binds so close as that. Not even virtue.
Virtue has not a secret that the world
Might not be told of—but rascality—
Oh, 't was a capital knave's trick of yours!
JEZ. Of mine? Hush! what do you mean?
ABD. Such villainy
Binds the accomplices in lasting bonds,
Which only death can sever.
JEZ. You may hang for it,
Unless you hold your tongue.
ABD. Ar'n't we alone?
And if I may not talk with you about it,
With whom, pray?
JEZ. What know I of all this matter?
You were the grand contriver.
ABD. No small glory
In such society to have been so.
I was about to praise you.
JEZ. Who forbids?
ABD. You, you.
JEZ. Speak on.
ABD. It must be fairly own'd
You play'd your part delightfully.
JEZ. My part?
A man like me has never parts to play.
ABD. I mean that when you smuggled this same poison
Into the poor monk's hands, no being saw you,
Except God and the devil.
JEZ. *terrified, irresolute, at last wild.* I? I? poison?
Traitor, I will deny it to your face.
'T was you that would have poison'd Saladin,
And he shall learn it too. You yet may feel
That I 've some influence.
ABD. Jezid, are you crazy?
JEZ. It may be so. Who dares impute to me
Such crimes? As truly as I carry this [*showing a ring.*
Mark of the sultan's favor on my finger,

You 've called perdition on your head.
ABD. In fact,
This is the sultan's signet-ring.
JEZ. I think so.
ABD. *aside.* How has he come by it? I must sift the mystery?
To Jezid. The sultan gave you this?
JEZ. Who else could give it?
ABD. Just now? Not long ago he had it on.
JEZ. Men learn to know their friends in time of danger.
ABD. Yes, yes. *Aside.* The hypocrite!
JEZ. And learn to prize them.
Who could have sav'd his life had I not done it?
ABD. And 't was to reconcile you that he gave
This precious ring?
JEZ. To reconcile—do I
Not know how to forgive mistaken slights?
ABD. I must confess—
JEZ. You know the monk was treacherous.
ABD. *aside.* Abdallah, you are an angel to this fellow!
JEZ. 'T was thought the sultan of the shock would die.
What could be done?
ABD. No doubt consult the imam:
Who waver'd—
JEZ. No: one must not be implacable.
I had in my possession a good medicine.
I took it to him. It has done its office.
With one foot in the grave it would have rais'd him.
ABD. He 's better then?
JEZ. And would have been quite well,
Had not the quackeries of this strange monk
Put off the cure.
ABD. That must have been true cordial,
Which he rewards with such a ring as this.
JEZ. At present nothing else could be bestow'd,
'T was the sole precious thing that Nathan's care
Left him possess'd of. The rapacious jew
Has drain'd him dry.
ABD. *aside.* Let us remember this!

JEZ. And I have further hopes: if now my art
Again succeeds, what shall prevent my having
The caliphate of Syria?
ABD. Has he promis'd?
JEZ. Yes, that he has.
ABD. I give you joy, my lord.
What 's to become of this poor wretch in prison?
JEZ. The traitor must expect the penalty
Of all his treasons. What is that to me? [*Goes.*

ABDALLAH, *alone.*

ABD. Now, Satan, die; this imam could replace you.—
And is it true, or have I dreamt it all,
That I suggested first this hellish deed,
Taught the proud priest the work he was to do,
Tutor'd him like a scholar, forc'd the monk
By my officiousness to place the beaker
Where Jezid could exchange it, saw alone
One cup remov'd, the other in its stead—
It must have been a dream! This imam knows
No jot about the matter. Villainy,
I could forswear thy service for this trick.
Where 's now the recompense of all my crimes,
Which the internal flatterer promis'd me?
This blockhead wins the wages of my wit,
And with the stolen draught of the poor monk,
Has earn'd the sultan's favor, wealth, and honor.
I 'll be reveng'd. But how? The draught, the draught,
Make that a second time! 'T is call'd for, imam. [*Goes.*

RECHA, *and the* TEMPLAR.

REC. Come, my dear Assad, let us go and see him,
And hear him. Is he still as firm as ever
In his pure faith, in suffering still as like
The holy man he worships?—Then we 'll go,
And clasp the sultan's feet, and he shall grant us
The life, the liberty, of him we love.

TEMP. Oh, that I knew the traitor in this business;
These hands, which snatcht thee from the flames, should steep him
In fires, e'en sevenfold fiercer, and applaud
The deed in heaven's broad eye.
[*He knocks at the prison-door, showing a pass: they enter.*
Gaoler, with leave.

SCENE.—Inside of the Prison.

RECHA, *the* TEMPLAR, *and the* MONK.

MONK. Welcome, my Assad and my Recha, welcome
A thousand times. This close and dark abode
Represses not your love from following me.
I thank you, children. Why is Assad angry?
TEMP. Ought anger not to rise against the traitor—
The would-be murderer of Saladin?
MONK. He, I am not, brave Assad.
TEMP. To believe you
Requires credulity.
REC. At least suspicious
Appearances as yet are not cleared up.
MONK. She too.—My God!—That weighs far heavier on me
Than all my bonds, by good men to be doubted.—
But calm thyself, my heart. He suffer'd too
With resignation; for it was God's will.
TEMP. I wish not to mistake.
REC. No, nor to doubt.
MONK. Were it a wonder, if all worthy men
Conspir'd against me? Is the deed not clear?
Did not the sultan from these hands receive
A poison'd chalice?
TEMP. At first sight it seem'd so.
And yet the guilt 's another's, and not thine.
Would you have snatcht, with such well-acted terror,
The cup away, if you had mixt the bane?

MONK. My dearest Assad, courts have cunning culprits,
And this plan was well-weigh'd. The sultan's mind
Was wrought up to suspicion by a letter
Fram'd with much art. He trembled at the potion,
Grew pale as death, and yet his noble spirit,
Trusting in virtue, was prepar'd to drink it.
I shudder still—it thrills athwart my heart,
How nearly I might not have been attentive,
Nor cast a searching eye into the beaker,
Not snatch'd in time the potion from his lips.—
Conscience is oftentimes undisciplin'd,
Returns too suddenly. Caught in the fact,
Was not the safest course the backing out?
Could I have hop'd for life, if he had perish'd?
My children, it is very hard to judge
Our fellow-mortals' deeds. All-seeing God
Alone can weigh them justly. A short instant
Suffices often to discolour truth.

REC. 'T was a short instant which drew doubt upon you,
The while Abdallah mov'd you to set down
The cup.

MONK. Was that observ'd? I did not think it.
Nor would I have allow'd myself to use
This point to clear myself.

TEMP. Why not?

MONK. I own
The struggle cost me effort; but, thank God!
The victory was achiev'd.

REC. Why should you not,
To clear yourself, point out the circumstances
Which would allow a new interpretation.

MONK. I point suspicion, which alas too often
Strikes at the guiltless head, against my neighbour?
Expose to suffering, innocence? If so,
Would not these bonds be merited?

TEMP. *clasping his hand.* Nobly felt!
God will deliver thee. 'T is terrible,
Beneath this weight of chains, that innocence
Should linger here. Go, Recha, to the sultan,

And tell him what we feel to be the truth.
MONK. No. Hasten not away, my dearest children;
Deprive me not of this sweet consolation,
As you care for me. I would fain embrace you,
But for these bonds, my son, and on your cheek
Weep tears of joy and thank, thou good young man.
TEMP. Yes, call me son; my heart reechoes father.
[*The templar embraces him; and Recha kisses his hand.*
MONK. Good God, if hours like these, so sweeter far
Than the loose joys of life, can enter here,
And to the sufferer more than compensate
All his past woes below—and heaven in prospect—
Who would repine for virtue's sake to suffer?
What have these walls of hateful, while within
God still is present with his consolations.
While here a conscience with itself at peace
Resides—no solitude has any terrors,
I have already been well known to sorrows,
Though not to this; but 't is another scope
To exercise my faith.
REC. That 's easy to you.
MONK. When the blow fell, I was awhile dismay'd;
But soon my heart took comfort: God has done it.
TEMP. God? God? Profane not so his holy name.
Traitors have done it.
MONK. That is not a comfort.
Be it they libel me—it had been kinder
To end my being! Men are always sinning,
But God directs their actions to his ends.
Without the Father's will no single hair
Falls to the ground, the holy teacher said.
That thought shed peace and calm submission o'er me,
And soon consol'd me. When they brought me hither,
They gave me time to meditate. Our Christ
Suffer'd yet more in the pure cause of virtue.
REC. And with like resignation.
MONK. Hast thou read it?
REC. Read? yes; and wept upon the good one's sufferings,
With many a pious sob accompanied

His footsteps to the cross, and mixt my tears
With the last sigh that broke his mortal heart.
MONK. Then praise the Lord that he is now alive.
Who once has felt the weight he had to bear,
How worthy of distinguish'd recompense
His generous, his divine, devotement was,
He must rejoice that God within the grave
Left him not long. How happy thou wouldst feel,
If from my hands these fetters dropt; if now
The sultan said: Be free.
REC. Oh, on my knees
I 'd thank him for it.
MONK. Well, then, thank thy God
That he has not allow'd his darling son
To be the martyr of the ill-intention'd
Without reward, and has at length reveal'd,
Through this great man's instructions, words and deeds,
How on yon side the grave each complex knot
Shall be untied, and virtue float triumphant
Through everlasting ages of reward.
REC. And yet this rests on miracle, good father;
That is a point where caution is behoof.
Almost I let my Assad perish by
Trusting ill-timedly in miracle.
MONK. That would have been his fault, not thine; for Daya,
You told me, called him often.
TEMP. Oftener far
Than to myself was welcome.
MONK. Wherefore, then,
Would he not come? My daughter, we may sin,
Not only against man, but against God.
No man, no angel, rescues from the grave
The might of God alone.
REC. You christians surely
Don't quite think so, when every day an image
Can do as much.
MONK. What idols can effect
Is not our question now. You did not find

Aught in his life of images and idols.
REC. No, not a syllable.
MONK. But much of God,
To whom no effort is miraculous,
Whose energy, which first created all,
Preserves all being, or recalls to life
With equal ease. If he had to await
Our faith to interfere, where were the world?
REC. And yet the fact, that one so put to death
Should be alive again, is solitary,
Unparallel'd, unheard of.
MONK. Solitary
Is every case that happens in the world;
Each but a thought of God's, on which his power
Bestows reality.
TEMP. Clearer, if you please.
MONK. What man is wholly like his fellow-man?
Who lives, thinks, dies, exactly like the other?
If thousands suffer, yet no two perhaps
In the same manner. God preserves them all,
And still for each provides distinct protection:
His thoughts are infinite, each new, each single.
Man comprehends not all; his narrow sphere
Sees but in detail, traces this resemblance,
That difference; but when God performs his wonders,
He only draws in large, that man may see.
If God decrees to recompense the good,
Must he ask us the how?
REC. Not that indeed;
And yet he asks faith of us, when he works
By miracle. We 're used but to the natural.
MONK. Therefore it strikes us less. The natural
Still requires faith, at least as much as wonders.
TEMP. Can you prove that?
MONK. Methinks the proof is easy.
Of each effect, the fundamental cause
Lies in the will of God. He wills; it is.
Is this to you so inconceivable,
Where will and deed have not to call in action,

An intermediate machinery?
But, in the course of nature, God conducts
By slow degrees from its incipient germ
The last result of his predestination.
Fancy yourselves a moment on the Nile—
There swims an ark of bulrushes, yet pregnant
With human destinies, of various nations,
For full three thousand years.
TEMP. *after a pause.* If it had sunk.—
REC. My understanding were not then so near
Sinking as 't is.
TEMP. Or had there not been nigh
A daughter of the king, to save the infant.—
But we are wasting here the time for action.
REC. Leave me. These bonds speak more than voice or books.
TEMP. Stay then. I 'll seek the sultan.
MONK. Do not grieve
To have listen'd for awhile to solemn things.

[*Templar goes.*

RECHA *and the* MONK.

MONK. I feel his truth of life with lively love,
As I ne'er felt it in the halls of joy.
Just so was he surrounded—prison-towers,
And chains, and threaten'd death—and such kind souls
To share his sorrows and to learn his comforts.
May-be some jewish maiden, who first learnt
In dungeons to believe on miracles,
Although her Moses had perform'd so many.
REC. The miracles of Moses prove themselves.
MONK. How so?
REC. From their effects, like the creation.
Who that has eyes to see can question this?
MONK. Not using them, he may. Who will deny,
Would do it, had he seen the first-created
Evolve himself from dust. Does the effect
Prove less for me, my Recha, than for you?

REC. I cannot tell.

MONK. Your Moses gave his miracles,
By hopes held out about the promis'd land,
An artificial weight, which aided faith;
But Christ to the cupidity of man
Offer'd no bribe; but, on the contrary,
Requir'd the sacrifice of all terrestrial;
Requir'd self-denial, patient suffering,
And, if 't was needful, painful shameful death.—
Yet they believ'd, confess'd, and perish'd joyful.

REC. I own it always seem'd to me surprizing,
So many should so satisfactorily
Have died a death of torment for a falsehood;
Have borne in life privation, misery,
And climb'd the scaffold with a conscious joy.
But Nathan us'd to answer, my dear Recha,
Men have in all times died for their opinions,
For falsehood, as for truth. The mussulman
Rivals the christian in his self-devotement,
And perishes for what he calls the truth.

MONK. They must at least have thought the dead one living.

REC. No doubt.

MONK. Whose death they had beheld, they imag'd
To their own minds as risen again indeed.
'T was a strange dream for all to dream, and die for;
To sacrifice their country, their religion,
And make themselves, for Christ's sake, fools on earth.
Which were the greater miracle, that all
Should thus concur in dreaming that which was not,
Or that he really rose? Were I to say,
Recha, thy father lives.

REC. That were deceiving.

MONK. You are too hasty.

REC. Is that possible?

MONK. Why not?

REC. Because no miracles occur.

MONK. Would that require a miracle? May not he
Have been but slightly wounded, lain awhile

In swoon unconscious with the other dead,
Have been unburied from the drifted sand,
And have recover'd all his active powers?
REC. Would it were true!
MONK. If further, I maintain'd
I 've seen him, I myself, and yesterday,
And would stake life upon it.
REC. I 'd believe you;
But that might happen naturally.
MONK. If
I thus deceiv'd you; still the imposition
Were less important, the error not so gross.
REC. You deceive me? So pious, conscientious,
A man as you, to God so all-devoted,
Who, did it rest with him, would make mankind
As honest as himself—can he deceive?
MONK. If I am pious, Recha, it was through
The love for those, who, to attest that Christ
Rose from the grave, shunn'd neither want nor death.
If I am sav'd, it must be through their faith.
And thousand others, who, like me, became
Pious, and full of hope through them, who liv'd,
In tribulation, virtuous lives, consol'd
By also walking in the road to bliss:
Can these, if God is just, be disappointed?
My dearest daughter, think you I could wear
These fetters thus, if aught within misgave me?
Could Peter, or could Paul, were they deceivers?
Imposture does not hug its penalties.
They could not think, or write, or feel, or suffer,
As they have done, if even doubtful. Read,
Recha, and feel. The question needs no learning,
Only an honest, prejudiceless heart.

[*Nathan comes in; he has heard these last words.*

The MONK, RECHA, *and* NATHAN.

NATH. That Recha has, or no one.
MONK. Nathan, thanks;

Next God, you gave it her.
NATH. So cheerful, friend,
In this sad place of sorrow.
MONK. Wherefore not?
We have long since forgotten we are here.
Joy dwells wherever man will seek to find her.
If murderers dwell there, temples may be prisons,
And dungeons, which the heart has hallow'd, temples.
NATH. You should not make my daughter an apostate.
MONK. Not if, as christian, she could cease to love thee.
What then indeed were christianity?
But Nathan will not feel displeasure, if
She finds new grounds for virtue and for hope.
NATH. Displeasure, Recha, no; whate'er you are,
Be so on full conviction. [*Recha kisses his hand.*
[*To the monk*] Now, my friend,
To your affair. Think not I 've blindly witness'd
The march of this event: and soon, I trust,
Your bonds are loosen'd.
REC. My dear father, how?
You comfort me. Do not delay a moment
To hasten his release.
NATH. Yet Recha seems
Quite easy in this tower.
REC. Yes; beside him,
Who would not? Yet I grieve to see him suffer.
NATH. And have you seen him suffer? I have not.
See what a treasure a good conscience is.
Never be guiltier than he in life,
And never will you be less happy. Soon
The difficulties will be all clear'd up.
REC. Thank you, my father.
NATH. Give your thanks to God.
MONK. You will not, Nathan, have been the protector
Of one ungrateful. But do nothing hasty:
Let not the laws risk for my preservation
The least attaint. While aught remains unclear,
I wear these fetters with a willing patience,
Ready to suffer, or to die, if so

The will of God requires.
REC. He 'll not forsake thee.
MONK. No, not forsake the just. To let him perish
Might be his will.
NATH. This is indeed the temper
Of real innocence. Now tell me, was not
The cup a silver one, in which you brought
The beverage you prepar'd?
MONK. It was of silver.
NATH. Nor could it have been otherwise; for all
The gold within the palace, Saladin
Had coin'd to drachmas, not an ounce remain'd.
What was the cup you handed to the sultan?
MONK. I know not, I was startled.
NATH. Well you might,
But see how guilt betrays itself, and even
By the false glitter of its shining mantle.
That was a golden beaker, out of which
The sultan was about to drink.
REC. Thank God,
That there are traces of the fraud.
MONK. You 've witnesses,
Proofs of all this?
NATH. I know what 's in the palace.
MONK. Still, might not I have brought it with me? So
The question 's undecided still.
NATH. For whom?
MONK. For all; for you: but not for me, and God.
NATH. Seek not to weave a net of useless doubt.
MONK. Wert thou the judge, would it become thee, Nathan,
On this alone to hinge a clear acquittal?
NATH. Not unless other circumstances also,
Convinc'd me of the culprit's innocence.
MONK. If you are friendly to me, be not judge;
If you are judge, you must not be my friend.
NATH. This is excess of scruple.
MONK. No, I speak
From my own feelings, and I do not wish

A deed like this should be at all passed over
With slight investigation. Saladin
Must be secured against all treachery,
He on whose life the welfare rests of millions.
What weighs my freedom in the scale?

NATH. I wish
You 'd not so much convinc'd me. Wait then yet,
We 'll track yet further this black treachery.

[*Nathan and Recha withdraw: the prison closes: as they are quitting the portal, Jezid approaches it, but, seeing them, draws back.*

NATH. Now leave me, Recha; yonder comes a man,
Whom I would question. There 's the mien of guilt,
As here of innocence.

REC. May heaven defend us! [*Goes.*

NATHAN *and* JEZID.

NATH. Don't fly from Nathan. Reverend imam, why
So hastily turn back? I was rejoicing
In the occasion to confer with you.

JEZ. *embarrassed.* Jew, I can't stay. I 've many things to do,
And would not waste in prate the precious hours.

NATH. Wrapt in your thoughts you half forget your road.

JEZ. How I forget—and are you blind, old jew?

NATH. Nay: you were coming hither, now you quit.

JEZ. I have a right to come. Look. Mark you this.
[*Showing the ring of the sultan.*

NATH. The sultan's ring! His friends should be each other's.

JEZ. We friends? Go, tell your Sittah, you aspire
To be the booby Jezid's friend, you 'll then
Have something new to prate of in the arbor.

NATH. Oh, he has listen'd. Can't you take a joke,
We saw you in your lurking-place, and tried
To punish you for prying. Such, you know,
Is quite fair play at court.

JEZ. And is that all?—

NATH. You should not take in earnest a mere jest.
Oh, what a pity you were not with us,
When the monk's cup of mischief was detected!
JEZ. Why, I was there.
NATH. But you were gone already,
When the detection came.
JEZ. I—I had nothing
To do there.
NATH. Yet you enter'd along with him.
JEZ. Was I with him?
NATH. Yes; you have just now said so.
JEZ. I said so? I said no such thing, I tell you.
NATH. Stay: recollect. I just now heard you say so.
JEZ. You lie.
NATH. You now inform me I am deaf,
Just now you had inform'd me I was blind.
JEZ. I tell you 't is a lie. I was not there.
NATH. Shall I call witnesses, and prove it to you.
I saw you. Sittah saw you: and the sultan.
Perhaps Abdallah, too.
JEZ. What? how? who? he?
NATH. I can't conceive why you would fain deny it.
Was not I present, just as well as you?
JEZ. Ay, so I think. What can you prove against me?
NATH. We are not talking about proving aught.
Let him, who feels the galling goad, first wince!
JEZ. Do you say so, and mean so?
NATH. Wherefore not?
JEZ. I don't much like your questions, jew, your questions.
NATH. Can we have aught to fear? Did we remove
The wholesome beaker, and instead thereof,
Put in its place, the poison?
JEZ. We?—What mean you?
Beware, I counsel you. Do you mean me?
I am sure, upon my conscience—
NATH. I can tell you,
The culprit now is more than half discover'd.
JEZ. Discover'd? Now don't cross me thus. I am going.
[*Trying to retire.*

NATH. He must have been a stupid fellow.
JEZ. Stupid!
NATH. A very blockhead.
JEZ. Blockhead me? damn'd jew.
NATH. You? Who has mention'd you? I mean the murderer.
JEZ. The murderer?
NATH. He who tried to kill the sultan,
He must have been a blockhead; for he plac'd
A golden beaker in the very stead
Of the monk's silver one. What ails you, Jezid?
You are pale. You tremble. Do command yourself,
Else you 'll betray too plainly—
JEZ. I—betray—
Do you mean me? I say, my golden beaker
Was stolen from me. Is my name upon it?
Answer me, jew.
NATH. May-be. I 've not examined.
JEZ. My name thereon? There 's magic then at work,
That monk deals in black arts.
NATH. Yet it was strange
That you, the moment the dark deed was done,
Slunk off.
JEZ. Dark deed—'t is false that I—
NATH. No doubt 't was all the black art of the monk
That you stood by, when he set down the beaker,
And only you.
JEZ. Stood by, just where the devil
Had plac'd you too. To hell, you and your monk.
NATH. The road we might securely find with you
To guide us, imam. But perhaps once more,
We in this life must yet converse again. [*Goes.*

JEZID, *alone.*

JEZ. Had you been crucified this morning, jew,
You would not have been able to squeeze from me
This sweat of agony. What next awaits me?
All is discover'd now, they know the whole,

And there 's an end of the hop'd caliphate,
Of influence, of honor. The deep devil
Makes but short work of mischief: he draws nigh,
Whispers his wicked counsel in your ear:
" So you may lift yourself: no earthly creature
Will form the least suspicion: a great man
Disdains all puny scruples: act and prosper."
No sooner have you yielded, he returns,
Trips up your feet, laughs at your shameful fall,
And tells his other dupes: " there lies a murderer."
He has a covenant with the jew, a covenant—
What shall I do? I was about to ask
The monk to make for me another draught
Of medicine, for the sultan, and 't would help me,
Perhaps e'en yet, to hand him such another
As that he took with profit. Devil, hush!
I mean him well. But how come round the monk?

[*Jezid approaches the prison, and is about to ask admission, when Abdallah enters.*

JEZID *and* ABDALLAH.

ABD. The sultan sends for you, and begs you 'll bring
Without delay another cordial draught.
JEZ. How can I?
ABD. Why, you promis'd him to do it.
JEZ. How can I, if an evil angel flings me
From one assassin's hands into another.
You want to murder me among you—wretches.
ABD. Are you insane? The sultan 's waiting for you.
JEZ. Another stab.
ABD. Shall I announce you are coming?
Another draught is soon compounded.
JEZ. Can I?
ABD. Yes, if you will. Must I say you don't choose it.
JEZ. Choose it!
ABD. With that same beverage from the monk
Purloin'd, you 've really almost cur'd the sultan:
Nothing is wanting but the other half.

But now there 's ne'er a beaker to be stolen.
JEZ. Curst mamaluke.
ABD. Your art is now at fault,
And so you are compassing about this tower,
To see if you can get the monk to help you.
JEZ. Who told you that, the devil?
ABD. You are thinking
How you can cant, or bribe, or frighten him
To do the thing you want.
JEZ. For the first time
In your whole life, Abdallah, you speak truth.
The devil whisper'd that into your ear.
You are his bondsman, and my inmost thoughts
He blabs to you. All is discover'd.
ABD. All?
JEZ. I wish I had told the jew that 't was from you
The whole foul plot proceeded—that from you
I took instructions, and obeyed your orders.
ABD. Has Nathan then discover'd any thing?
JEZ. Ask him yourself. [*Goes to knock at the prison-door.*
ABD. Yes, that I shall, and soon.
[*Meanwhile Abdallah comes forward, and soliloquizes.*
This fellow has betrayed himself. 'T is now
High time to take precautions, so as to fling
On him the blame—if in Abdallah's head
There 's brain enough for that. If not: then, sultan,
You 'll hear from me what you 'll not care to spout
To-morrow, or next day, in paradise. [*Goes.*

SCENE.—Inside of the Prison.

JEZID *and the* MONK.

JEZ. Monk, do you know your life 's in jeopardy?
You were about empoisoning the sultan.
MONK. No. That was never any thought of mine—
Anxiety about his life I feel,
Far more than for my own. And do you bring
The welcome news that he is living still—

That apprehension has not made him worse,
That still there 's hope.
JEZ. Hope? yes! if there 's relief
Soon given.
MONK. Go, and do it.
JEZ. So I would
Gladly; but, though I understand my art,
There is, in lucky hours, what helps or thwarts.
MONK. Science, alas! is not omnipotent;
God, as he pleases, guides the last result.
JEZ. There is an iron fate, I often say,
Which man's weak hand is impotent to bend:
On one it scatters wealth, on others, honor;
On some, as upon thee, a heavy chain.—
Now—that 's well said.
MONK. Not much so.
JEZ. Do you think
Yourself more wise than I, and mean to blame me,
And to dispute my creed?
MONK. Be calm, good imam.
Truth loves not weapons, which impatience lends,
She asks for reasons. Iron Destiny
Would crush our hopes below, our hope above.
A wise good father, governing in kindness,
Giving to each what 's best for him for ever,
So it be used for the immortal end,
Best suits my judgement. These cold chains to me
Preach more of good, than crowns could: they are hints,
Which all-wise providence reveals below,
That here our being ends not.
JEZ. I was trying,
As learned men are wont, in a smooth way,
To turn our converse to the point I came for.
MONK. Speak out, then.
JEZ. You are apprehended here
As one, who aim'd at murdering Saladin;
Yet you might still be sav'd.
MONK. How so? The laws
Ought not to save the murderer.

JEZ. Laws indeed—
But I have power, and I could help you.
MONK. How?
Not to break them, I trust.
JEZ. If I contriv'd
The means for your escape—
MONK. Not only I,
You too would then deserve a punishment;
I doubly.
JEZ. Monk, then, are you bent on hanging?
MONK. I thought you had some purer means to offer.
JEZ. There is no other way.
MONK. Oh yes, there is.
Suppose you knew the traitor, for example,
Who took away my silver beaker, and
Bestow'd instead the poison'd golden one,
And were so conscientious as to name him.
JEZ. I name him? I myself discover him?
MONK. Why not? It is your bounden duty surely
As man, as priest.
JEZ. Well—to be short with you,
I shall let that alone: yet, if you would
Accomodate me—
MONK. That may ask no treason:
If so; speak out: I will, with all my heart.
JEZ. Your first draught has done service to the sultan,
He asks another such. Now, I know not
Of what you had compos'd it.
MONK. 'T would not help you,
Were I to state it: for the plants 't was made of
Do not grow here: they came from Libanon.
JEZ. Just so: and were you to compound another,
I would be grateful.
MONK. Gladly should I help
The sultan, if I could—but how proceed?
My drugs are taken from me. Bring me them,
And for some minutes free me from these bonds,
We 'll try. No matter in whose name the sultan
Mends, so he but gets well. Oh, lose no time.

JEZ. There 's a weight off my breast. Now let 's be quick.
The monk may take his chance, when I am serv'd.

[*As Jezid is going, Osman comes in, and detains him.*

OSMAN. Oh, do I catch you here, this saves some trouble.
Stop, imam, stop.

IMAM. I have no time.

OSMAN. You must
After this piece of work have need of rest.

IMAM, *showing his ring.*
True, but I 've pressing business for the sultan.

OSMAN. Your ring does not complete your dress. I 've here
A slight addition to confer upon you.

IMAM. I 'm quite content—the caliphate comes next.

OSMAN. What are you prating, traitor, in with you,
There mix your poisons, there exchange your beakers.
In with him to the tower, and bind him fast.

[*The guards bring fetters, and proceed to manacle the imam.*

IMAM. I, in the tower, I, I?

OSMAN. In with you, traitor!

[*The prison-doors are closed upon him.*

ACT V.

SCENE.—The Audience-room, and Sick-room of Saladin.

SALADIN, SITTAH, *and* NATHAN.

SAL. Thank God that all this villainy so soon
Has been clear'd up: that the monk's innocence
Runs from the test so gloriously resplendent.
How easily he might have been the victim
Of their dark plans, and we too stain'd ourselves
With guiltless blood, had heaven not guided us

To the right clue. And, under God, to thee,
My Nathan, we are specially indebted
For that industrious and clear-sighted search
Into the business, which has solv'd the problem.
Thus to have sav'd the life of a good man
Is more reward to thee, than we could offer.
Long live to practice and enjoy thy virtue!

NATH. To God belongs the thank, when he employs
A human instrument to work his justice.

SIT. I most rejoice on your account, my brother;
More than one life I trust is hereby sav'd.

NATH. God grant so.

SAL. We will soon pass on to sentence.
But let me tell you first 't was not my father
Who wrote the false forg'd letter. I have now,
By trusty hands, receiv'd quite other news.
This monk has sav'd his life by medicine,
And is commended to me as his friend.

NATH. Jezid is not alone the guilty person;
He has accomplices; and I suspect
Abdallah will be found to have tun'd the strings.

SAL. We 'll see: the culprit must be brought before me.
[*Nathan goes.*
He is a prudent man, who, ere he acts,
Weighs all the consequences of his conduct.
I am not quite easy with this business. Jezid,
Some anger at your hands I have deserv'd;
No one, still less a sultan, should have trifl'd,
As I did, with your temper. Here he comes.

SALADIN, SITTAH, NATHAN; OSMAN *leading in* JEZID.

SAL. Jezid, you ill have thank'd me for my favors.
Thus by high treason to disgrace your office,
And treacherously fling upon a stranger
The semblance of the guilt, well merits death.
Your conscience has betray'd you. Now, speak out,
A frank confession may disarm my wrath—

Look, is this beaker yours?
JEZ. Yes.
SAL. Did you bring it
Fill'd with this poison here?
JEZ. I?
SAL. You? I ask.
JEZ. It was not of my own accord I did it.
SAL. At whose suggestion then?
JEZ. The evil spirit's.
SAL. 'T was he inspir'd you, was it?
JEZ. Yes, 't was he.
SAL. But he belongs not to our jurisdiction.
NATH. Was it some devil in a human form?
JEZ. He was possess'd, and by the evil spirit,
Who bade me do it, but I name him not.
SAL. You must.
JEZ. You saw the whole that pass'd.
Could I have taken the monk's beaker from him
Had he not been prevail'd upon by one
To set it down? 'T was manag'd—
NATH. By Abdallah?
JEZ. Jew, you have hit it. I should not have plann'd
The deep-laid scheme, but that he made it easy.
NATH. When happen'd that?
JEZ. Jew, dare you ask that question?
SAL. No matter, he or I. Do you reply.
JEZ. *to Nathan.* You were yourself the cause.
NATH. I? I? How so?
JEZ. Had we not been conceal'd, when you and Sittah
Spoke of me scornfully—
SIT. So we 're the culprits.
JEZ. I had not done it. I was chafed to anger.
And then the devil had fair play to tempt me:
I coveted revenge.
SAL. Wrote you the letters?
JEZ. Not I.
SAL. Who then?
JEZ. Is that with you a question?
SAL. He too, Abdallah?

JEZ. So I apprehend.
SAL. Osman, go fetch him hither: but conceal
Why he is sent for. [*Osman leads away the imam.*
O my dearest Nathan,
Happy the regent, for whom providence,
Among the unprincipled surrounding croud,
Has station'd one man upright like thyself.
Life were a hell, did virtue never haunt it.
Now go and loose the fetters of thy friend,
That 's the best recompense thy heart can wish.
[*Nathan retires: and the curtain spreads before the sick-room, so as to leave the anterior room empty. Osman returns, with the imam, and with Abdallah under a guard.*
OSMAN. *to Abdallah.* 'T is well I met you; I was after you.
ABD. What says my Osman?
OSMAN. That you come in the nick.
ABD. When the great send for us, my dearest Osman,
There 's commonly some weighty thing depending.
OSMAN. Perhaps the sultan wants to have his sabre
Scour'd, or his best horse ridden.
ABD. Things like those
Oft have their weight at court.
OSMAN. For you 't were better
If you were eating beans beside the Ganges,
Than dreaming of your influence.
ABD. How so, Osman?
OSMAN. Suppose I knew, am I compell'd to tell you?
ABD. Yes, if you are honest.
OSMAN. All my honesty
Can't help a rogue. Abdallah! what 's the world?
ABD. The world—is round.
OSMAN. As round as any mill-wheel,
And turns as fast, and what was uppermost
Is soon at bottom. You are now at top,
And presently you 'll find yourself at bottom,
Scriggling like any eel the stork has caught.
ABD. Just as of old.
OSMAN, *pointing to the imam.* And so I shall remain.

But revolutions, such as here befall,
Are worse than as of old.
ABD. *to the Imam.* What 's this, Sir Imam,
How stands the caliphate?
OSMAN. Perchance 't will be
Partition'd. One man's shoulders may not serve
To carry the whole weight.
ABD. Is the draught ready,
You were compounding for the sultan's lip?
JEZ. Yes, ready, scoundrel, to bestow on you
Its mortal taste, perhaps.
OSMAN. A precious pair!
Chain them together in unparting bonds,
They 'll be each other's torment e'en in hell.
[*To the fore-mentioned accede Nathan and the Monk, and soon after the Templar and Recha.*
NATH. *to the monk.* Yes, he is just; and even here below
Mostly rewards the virtuous for their worth.
MONK. And sometimes more than their good deeds could claim.
Sorrows are often recompenses, which
Prevent the pleasures from corrupting us,
And keep us in a wholesome preparation
For that great day of retribution, when
The mortal shall put on immortalness;
When from all arms the bonds of death shall drop,
And we shall clasp each other without fear
Of ever being torn asunder more.
And there are golden moments here below
Which antedate this feeling of salvation.
See, I had made a covenant with my heart,
And was resign'd to die: but now my soul
Floats with celestial triumph here on earth,
And feels that God is just, that faith is precious,
And virtue all in all; and that again
My life contentedly were risked to keep it.
But how feels he, to whom I owe this rescue?
NATH. Well. But his deed cost little. Happier still
In the strong feeling of his useful efforts

Was he, who, at the hazard of his life,
So often at the sword's point shielded mine.
MONK. To whom do you allude, who was to save
My future rescuer?
NATH. To Recha's father.
MONK, *awfully*. How wondrous are the ways of heaven, my friend,
Let us in grateful worship bow before them.
'T is much to save a fellow-creature's life,
'T is more to save his everlasting soul.
NATH. No doubt, if that repos'd on alien effort.
MONK. And to have sav'd the souls of all mankind,
To have given life to all, and life eternal,
To have ransom'd from the penalty of sin,
By willing sacrifice and bloody death,
The human race itself, is surely more
Than unassisted human power could hope
To achieve, than unassisted human reason
Could hope to comprehend; it is a thought
Worthy to have dwelt in God's high mind for ever.
If God has thought expedient thus through him
To perfect our salvation, were he merely
A man, his bliss must rival that of God:
When round him all the myriads shall assemble
Whom he to everlasting life creates
Anew—how gladly, then, my Nathan, we
Shall gaze together on the first-born Son
Of the great Father, the select exemplar
Of all that 's good and great and like the Godhead,
And grateful kneel at the Redeemer's feet,
That e'en our sins are in oblivion sunk,
And bliss vouchsaf'd for all eternity.
NATH. Monk, you are for your faith more eloquent
Than many a patriarch: if all thought like you,
It were delight at least to be a christian.
MONK. Oh, that you gave us one confessor more.
NATH. We 'll talk of that at leisure. Saladin
Will need our presence soon in his apartment.
ABD. *approaches the monk, and sqeezes his hand flatteringly.*

Here is our friend: let me congratulate
Your quick return among us, worthy man,
How soon is innocence triumphant! Yonder
Stands one, whose doom is nigh. [*Pointing to the imam.*

MONK. Rejoice not at misfortuue: can it be
To man a pleasure, that his brother suffers,
An honor, that his fellow-creature fails?

NATH. And were his failings rather instigated
By other's malice than his own, the shame
Of exultation would be more misseeming.

ABD. I think so too. Your sentiments are noble,
Nathan, and worthy of the friend you 've sav'd.
'T is true that men are weak; to-day, to-morrow,
Each yields its crop of crime; yet malice must
Be doom'd to punishment for virtue's sake.
I was about to seek you, and to tell you
What of the Imam's conduct I drew from him
By dexterous question.

NATH. What you have to say,
Is better stated first before the sultan.
[*Assad and Recha come in.*
To the monk. There comes a pair, my friend, with fuller hearts
To give you gratulation. Come, our children,
And from my hands receive our cherish'd friend;
More than your tears my words, I hope, avail'd him.

REC. It is enough, we have him.

TEMP. Rather thus,
By force of justice, than by dint of prayer.

MONK. Praise to the Lord alone: we are but men.

NATH. Had Saladin to mere petition yielded,
Where was the duty of his justice thron'd?

MONK. The criminal has also tears and prayers,
And often is more moving than the righteous,
Who feels his dignity.

NATH. The judge should yield
Only to reasons. See, the Sultan beckons.
[*The curtain, which concealed Saladin's sick-room, is withdrawn.*

To the others. You 'll wait awhile here in the antechamber,
Until you are summons'd.

ABD. *aside.* Ho? what stately airs!
The jew gives orders, as if he were sultan.

SCENE.—The Sultan's chamber.

SALADIN, SITTAH, NATHAN, *the* MONK, ASSAD, RECHA.

SAL. *to the monk.* Welcome, my friend, thrice welcome.
With sad heart
I bade thee go: so justice and the laws
Seem'd to require. I do not make excuses;
You best can feel what I was bound to do—
Happy that you are now restor'd to me,
And dearer far than ever.

MONK. I don't ask
Excuses, Saladin: I am a man,
And know what human passions lead to. I
Came here a stranger—

SAL. Landed among murderers
And traitors: where is innocence secure,
If not in palaces?

TEMP. Perhaps in huts.

MONK. Wherever an all-seeing God protects it.
Yet hear me, sultan, it is hard in courts
To fancy that a man draws near the throne
Without some view to dignity or wealth.
None knew me here: none knew I needed nothing
But this plain garment, and my daily bread.
Alas! not all who wear this simple robe
Are free from worldly views: a shirt of hair
Defends not against vice. Envy, suspicion,
Officious zeal, suggest interpretations,
Which reason cannot suddenly appretiate:
Let us thank God that from mistaken symptoms
No greater evil than these bonds arose.
To me they are gain, not loss. For all things serve

Him, who knows how to use them. Do not seek
To give me vengeance against my accusers;
If thou canst pardon, sultan, I have done it:
God is the great forgiver of us all.

REC. Sultan, Oh, never part with him again:
This is indeed a man.

SAL. Do stay with us,
And be our friend for ever: in a day
We are grown dearer to each other, and
More confidently knit to one another,
Than years could fasten ordinary souls.
Nathan and you shall henceforth be the first
Among my household.

MONK. Your partiality
Goes but too far. What am I fit for here?

SAL. We 'll find that out.

MONK. For business more is needful
Than probity. I am but a physician,
May heal the body, but not save the state.
When thou art well, I take my staff again,
And recommence my pilgrimage of mercy;
Sufferers dwell every where.

SAL. Not every where
So many worthy people, who esteem you.

MONK. There 's many a good man scatter'd in the world;
What I, for God's sake, had renounc'd, I find
Often again e'en here. Where'er I wander,
Some roof gives shelter; bread, sufficient food;
The well-head, drink; and in the human heart
Often a father, brother, sister, son,
Or daughter, who could love me, cling about me,
And pay my well-meant help with strong affection.
God keeps his promises.

TEMP. Here too, good man,
Have you not found a daughter and a son?

MONK, *pointing to Saladin and Nathan.*
And here a father, and a brother here.

SIT. And if you want the sister, pray take me.

MONK. With pleasure.

SAL. Have you thank'd your true preserver?
NATH. We understand each other without forms.
MONK. Well, good is good. Imposing circumstances
Render a deed in human eyes more splendid,
Not in the sight of God. Hadst thou with hazard
Of thy own life from fire or water sav'd me,
'T were not perhaps a case of equal service.
Through such appearances of evil purpose
With steady penetration to have sought,
And found, and prov'd, their groundless character,
Unprejudic'd by rumor, creed, profession,
Thy noble heart sought only truth and justice.
Thank God, my friend and saviour.
SAL. Where 's Abdallah?
TEMP. In waiting.
SAL. Let him come.
NATH. He means, it seems,
To impeach the Imam.
TEMP. He; the hypocrite!
[*The monk meanwhile converses with Sittah.*
SIT. *to Saladin.* Sultan, he begs that you will spare yourself;
And wishes to compound another draught;
Exertion may, as yet, he says, do harm.
SAL. Prepare the potion; but come hither soon,
And be the witness of my equity.
[*The monk goes.*
REC. O Saladin, ne'er let him quit us more.
SAL. You are in love with this gray cowl of his.
REC. Not with his cowl, my sultan, with his heart.
SIT. He will not stop with us. This is no cloister;
And in a court the grave religious garb
Is rarely welcome: the Abdallahs win,
With treacherous flatteries, an easier way.
SAL. Who tells you so, my Sittah? When a man
Has worth and talent, the religious garb
Must not exclude him from the love of those
Who have a heart for duty and for truth.
His mind is form'd to benefit an empire.

TEMP. Indeed it is.
SAL. And far more to be trusted
Than all the talent of those selfish parasites,
Who come to court to fill their paunch and purse,
No matter if the empire sink or rise.
Whether the subject give or beg his bread,
So some is on their tables, boots it them?
My Sittah, you are joking.
SIT. Half and half.
SAL. To love good men is a great step to virtue.
[*To the foregoing Abdallah and Osman accede.*
SIT. We 've all borne hard to-day upon this Imam;
I with my tongue, you with your cup, Abdallah.
ABD. Excuse me, Sittah. Error is so easy.
'T was Jezid brought his beaker, plac'd it there,
And slunk away. I could observe the whole;
But not aware that it was aught but medicine,
I was not to accuse him. It was only
After he got the sultan's signet-ring,
For handing back again the stolen beverage,
That I found means to sift him. He was swollen,
Like a blown bladder, with his sudden favor,
Talk'd of his caliphate, as more than promis'd.
How should this empty fool, this iron pate,
Have made such medicine, thought I, and I went
To Sittah to command another draught.
Then all came out. I found him in the prison,
Coaxing the monk to mix him such another.
SAL. The monk assist him? Is that true?
ABD. He 'll not
Himself deny it.
NATH. He was at the prison.
OSMAN. 'T was there I seiz'd him, as he left the monk.
SAL. *to Nathan.* Did the monk tell you this?
NATH. No, not a word. [*Monk enters.*
SAL. He is coming. We must ask him. Are you ready?
MONK. Alas, my sultan, no: they now have made
The unkindest cut of all.
SAL. What happens, friend?

MONK. My plants are taken from me.
SAL. Who has done it?
MONK, *pointing to Abdallah.* If the guards answer truly, this is he.
ABD. And so I did, but with a proper purpose:
Least Jezid should by means of them conceal
His string of frauds, I burnt them.
SAL. Was the Imam
With you in prison?
MONK. Yes.
SAL. What was his purpose?
MONK. To get another draught such as I brought you.
SAL. And you were giving it.
MONK. Why should I not?
I could have died more easy, had I first
Done for your life my utmost.
SAL. And have let
Th' impostor reap the credit—
MONK. Matter'd that?
SAL. Now God reward thee: that is new with us.
SIT. You see he is no man of courts.
REC. But better.
TEMP. Like those in tournaments, who do not joust,
But spare caparisons for any horse.
SAL. This Jezid, in my judgement, is a villain.
What does Abdallah think that he deserves?
ABD. Death: nothing less. His treachery might have cost
Your precious life.
SAL. I think so too: it might.
And what does he deserve, who first suggested
The murderous plot; who on his anvil shap'd
The poignard given to this man to strike with?
ABD. Death also. But I cannot think that Jezid
Had prompters: he is bad enough for this.
SAL. You call'd him empty fool, and iron pate—
Does iron weld itself?
ABD. A simile
Tells little, sultan.
SAL. Were I to compare thee

Abdallah, with the viper, would that tell?
Thou hast pronounc'd the sentence on thyself.

MONK. The talking much fatigues thee, my dear sultan.

SAL. So be it: yet I must distribute justice
Before I die. If you could pardon all,
The laws cannot. Ought I to be a sultan,
If I refus'd to execute them. No.

SIT. You might to other judges sure intrust
Their application.

SAL. How to other judges?
Am I among the frogs to be king log?
To live inactive, eat and drink, and sleep,
Play chess, and die? No, no, while life remains,
Let us make use of life, and render justice.
Thy guilt, Abdallah, is no longer doubtful;
Jezid was urged by thee to this foul act,
And now thou mak'st a merit to betray him.

ABD. I, sultan, I?

NATH. Wherefore defend yourself?
All is detected: witnesses are here.

ABD. Now then, support my supplication, Nathan,
For mercy to the sultan. [*Throws himself at Saladin's feet.*

SAL. The laws require a sacrifice. Hadst thou
Succeeded, here on this just man the blame
Had fall'n, and had remain'd. Thou worthless wretch,
What does such complex villainy deserve?

ABD. Death from the sultan, if 't was with the sultan,
And not with Saladin, I had to plead.
To-day is not the first time he forgives;
He long has learnt that mercy more avails
To purchase love than fear'd severity.

SAL. Thrice thou hast earn'd the penalty of death;
First against me; against this spotless man;
And then against the Imam. Call him in.

[*The foregoing remain. Osman withdraws, and returns with Jezid guarded.*

To Jezid. Your treason merits death: but I commute
Your punishment to a perpetual prison.

ABD. And mine?

SAL. Die.
ABD. Must I, sultan? And to-day
Is Saladin himself no longer? He,
The merciful, the generous—
SAL. I ought not,
If I would pardon thee: thy guilt 's too black!
ABD. Since thou art sternly just for others; be
Just for me too, and right my cruel wrongs.
SAL. Have I refus'd to hear or to redress them?
ABD. *springing up hastily, speaks with animation.*
Then hear me, sultan, I am not a bastard,
But born of noble blood. By treachery,
By treason, sultan, I became thy slave.
[*Saladin looks at Abdallah with marks of perturbation.*
SAL. Man, thou art brooding mischief. In thine eye
Glares a terrific hate, as wouldst thou slay me.
SIT. Send him hence.
SAL. No: it never shall be said
That Saladin decreed his death unheard.
Speak, if with Azrael's[2] voice.
ABD. A thankless vassal,
Rais'd from the dust by my old grandsire's love,
Forgot not only what to gratitude
Was due, but all his oaths of fealty,
And, when his benefactor died, he seiz'd
The whole inheritance, and robb'd the children
Of him to whom he owed his own advancement.
SAL. Did he do this by force, and no one punish'd
The ungrateful, the disloyal vassal?
ABD. No one:
He lords it undisgrac'd, and wears his plunder.
SAL. Had he no hue, no color, of a right?
ABD. Pretences are not wanting to usurpers.
The heir was at a distance, when my grandsire
Sank to the tomb, and still a minor. When
He reach'd his home, he found th' officious vassal
Become his guardian, and possest of all.

[2] *Azrael*, the angel of death.

The sword bestow'd, the sword alone maintain'd
This usurpation, till the legal heir
Died in the bloom of life: chagrin his poison.
So fell my father.
SAL. Does the robber live?
ABD. He lives in honor.
SAL. *aside.* God of heaven! what ails me?—
How does he use his trust?
ABD. Builds hospitals,
Schools, mosks; bestows with overflowing hands
His gold on those he fears, and thus he wins,
By squandering plundered wealth, the praise of all.
SAL. *aside.* This is a messenger of death.
NATH. I fear so.
ABD. Now, sultan, I appeal to thee for justice.
SIT. Sure the good use he makes of his possession—
SAL. Must not excuse the robber: the best use
Were to return it to the rightful owner.
ABD. Whate'er of good he does, is only taken
From what he has to spare; nor are his neighbours,
Where he 's the stronger, from his inroads safe.
SAL. What has he done to them?
ABD. The great say, conquer'd;
The little, robbed.
SAL. Man, you are speaking truth;
It is all one. [*He is about to swoon.*
SIT. My brother, you turn pale.
REC. *reaching for some balsam, which Sittah applies.*
For God's sake. help.
SAL. Stay. It will soon be over.
Speak on.
ABD. Now wilt thou do me justice?
SAL. Yes.
He shall die first; then thou.
ABD. Swear that to me.
SAL. By God above, he shall.
ABD. *approaches the sultan, and says with a strong terrific voice:* Die, traitor, then: thou first; I next.
SAL. My God!

Lend me support. [*They assist him.*

TEMP. Abdallah, are you crazy?

ABD. No, no. Nureddin's ghost cries out for vengeance.
I am his grandson, Saladin his robber.
Die, sultan, die; thou first; I next.

SAL. I shall.

SIT. My Saladin!

SAL. Nureddin is aveng'd:
And, well for me, already here below.

NATH. I fear the worst. Wretch, thou hast won thyself
But a short respite.

SAL. Fare ye well, my friends.

REC. My sultan, oh, my second father.

TEMP. Mine too.

SAL. *to the monk.* Friend, our acquaintance here has been but short:
It will, I trust, be longer in yon world.
To-day is all fulfill'd.

MONK. My God, thy ways
Are wondrous.

NATH. Wonderful and terrible.

MONK. If I must see thee perish unassisted,
At least thou shalt not without joy of heart.
Behold in me thy brother, thy own Assad,
My dearest, my beloved, Saladin.

SAL. My Assad?

MONK. I am he.

NATH. And can it be?
My Filnek, my preserver!

SIT. In a cowl!

SAL. Come to my arms—then I shall die in peace.
My Assad living, yes, my heart had told me!

SIT. Did Assad not in battle perish?

MONK. Wounded,
Not fatally, he on the field of battle
Was left half buried in the drifted sand;
But he reviv'd.

REC. My real father. Oh! [*Embraces him.*

SAL. *with faultering voice.*

Thou hast on my last moments scatter'd comfort;
And made my dying day a day of joy.
Farewell, all my beloved, and for ever! [*Dies.*

SIT. God, God, he dies! the dearest, best of brothers!

[*They surround his couch in attitudes of mute grief, while the curtain falls.*

The real author of this tragedy, John George Pfranger, was court-preacher at Meinungen, and was highly esteemed for his moral and intellectual virtues. While his Monk of Libanon passed for a work of Lessing, it was welcomed with crowing joy, and was sincerely preferred by the christian world to the previous play, which it continues. The concluding part of the first act, in which Saladin becomes so far delirious as to reveal his inmost thoughts, was pointed out as more poetic and pathetic than any scene in Nathan the Wise. And the entire delineation of the Monk was applauded as the finest personification in literature of the idea of a perfect christian.

After the family of Lessing had disavowed this posthumous publication, and it was admitted to be a forgery, critics began to discover that the farcical vulgarity of Jezid's character is justly offensive in a serious drama; that Nathan, Sittah, the Templar, and Recha, are but degraded likenesses of the original characters; and that the fable of the piece is, in the highest degree, dissatisfactory and incomplete. After the decease of Saladin, where was the sovereignty to vest? His heir apparent is the Monk, and next the Templar. The first would not accept, the second could not attain, the supreme rank; so that all the friends of Saladin are turned adrift at his death, without any better prospect than exile, confiscation, and poverty.

This is not a catastrophe, but the commencement of new distresses. And why does the Monk conceal so long his relationship to the parties, when an early avowal of it would have prevented all mistrust and all embarassment?

The poem has another more vital, or rather mortal, fault. Pfranger had professional superstitions, and treats the local conventional morality of his sect, as an inherent universal rule of right. He has not hesitated to represent all his characters as judging of their own actions by this peculiar christian standard. The death-bed repentance of Saladin is wholly unnatural; with the faith and fashion of a Mahometan, he could not feel remorse at having wielded the sword in behalf of his faith and his people. The monk must previously have converted him, if the dialogue at the close of the first act was to take place. But Lessing was a philosopher, and every where appeals to the instinctive sympathies of human nature: hence his drama has progressively gained ground in public favor for half a century; has climbed from the closet to the theatre; and is claimed by his country as a national classic; while Pfranger's imitation is so nearly forgotten, that it only serves as a warning against the prejudices of the angelic school. The Polyeucte of Corneille, however eloquently versified, has fallen, in like manner; by attempting to hold up as meritorious the fanaticisms of a religious intolerance, which the epurated morality of civilization is walking away from in disgust.

§ 7.

Groop of Vienna poets—Denis—Alxinger—Haschka—Fridrich—Blumaner.

VIENNA, or, as the Germans call it, Wien, (and it is time for English geography to denominate foreign cities by the names in use on the spot,) has not produced its natural crop of excellence in authorship. A metropolis may be expected to collect, and should endeavour to patronize, the stronger minds in the nation which it superintends; but, except during the short sway of the emperor Joseph the second, an intolerance of liberal literature has marked the policy of the Austrian government; which not merely prohibited, but practically resisted, the introduction and circulation of all writings tending to encourage freedom of sentiment, or to prepare the reform of social institutions. The leaden mace of superstition, the cast-iron sceptre of hereditary despotism, were girt in the fasces of the magistrate, and paraded with efficacious terror among all domestic as well as public assemblages of the people. Yet instruction is a powerful instrument of government; it doubles the force of any community by facilitating its harmonious exertion; and, like the foil of the fencer, it can be wielded, or parried, or incurred, without insecurity.

Some German poets, however, budded at Wien, though for a short season. Michael Denis, who was

born in 1729 at Schärding, a frontier-town then belonging to Bavaria, entered, at the age of eighteen, the order of Jesuits, gave classical and mathematical lessons at the seminaries of Grätz and Clagenfurt, and became in 1759 inspector of the similar studies cultivated at the military academy, founded by Maria Theresa.

After the accession of Joseph the second, and the suppression of the order of Jesuits, Denis transferred his attention to bibliographic studies, and was appointed chief bibliothecary to the Garelli library, in which situation he merited public gratitude for the critical catalogue he gave of its contents, and for the many curious manuscripts and scarse books, which he edited, or analized. He first evulgated twenty-five letters of Saint Augustin, which had escaped the Benedictine editors, and wrote an erudite history of typography at Vienna. He was finally made overseer of the imperial library there, which appointment he held until his death in 1800.

The first poetical attempt of Denis was a metrical chronicle of the seven-years' war. Next he published an epistle to Klopstock, which contributed to draw an attention, new in southern Germany, to this protestant poet, for whose piety and orthodoxy the jesuit could vouch. To the chorus-dramas, and bardic odes, Denis became peculiarly attached, and was thus prepared to receive with enthusiam the analogous sceneries and personages of Ossian, all whose poems he translated into German hexameter. The address to the sun will supply a specimen.

Thou, who roll'st in the firmament, round as the shield of my fathers,
Whence is thy girdle of glory, O Sun! and thy light everlasting?
Forth thou com'st in thine aweful beauty; the stars at thy rising
Haste to their azure pavillions, the moon sinks pale in the waters;

But thou movest alone: who dareth to wander beside thee?
Oaks of the mountain decay, and the hard rock crumbles asunder;
Ocean shrinks, and again grows; lost is the moon from the heavens;
While thou ever remainest the same, to rejoice in thy brightness.
Altho' laden with storms be the wind, loud thunders be rolling,
Lightnings be glaring around, thou look'st from the clouds in thy beauty,
Laughing the storm; but, alas! thou shinest in vain upon Ossian:
He no more may behold thy effulgency, whether thy fair locks
Yellowly curl on the clouds of the morning, or red in the west wave
Quivering dip. Yet thou art perhaps but like me, for a season—
Finite e'en thy years—thou too shalt be sleeping in midnight,
Deaf to the voice of the morning. Exult, then, O Sun! in thy vigor:
Dark and unlovely is age, as the glimmering light of the moon-beams
Pale that shine thro' mists over-rolling the face of the grey sky,
When on the heath sweep blasts and the sleet-vext traveller shivers.

Denis also wrote latin poetry: his epitaph on Pope Pius VI may deserve transcription.

Papa pius, patriâ Cæsenas, Angelus ante
Braschius, ingenio vividus, ore decens,
Casibus adversis in serum exercitus ævum,
Jure peregrinus dictus apostolicus.
Post varios tandem vitæque viæque labores
Ossa Valentino liquit in exilio.
Perdita sub sextis semper, testante poetâ,
Hoc quoque sub sexto perdita Roma fuit.
Sed ne crede Pii culpa periisse, viator,
Perdidit, heu! Romam temporis impietas.

Many occasional poems of Denis are addressed to Austrian worthies, but the most original of his productions is entitled "The Temple of the Æons." At the north pole, in a palace of ice, are supposed to assemble the ghosts of departed centuries. The earth, in the poet's opinion, had lasted 6900 years at the close of the year 1800 of our era; and the Æons are consequently sixty-nine in number. At the midnight hour which commences the nineteenth century, they

awake from their centennial sleep, and prepare to receive their new brother, who arrives to give an account of what happened of remarkable during the period of his abode among men. He sketches the principal events he had witnessed with solemn and impressive criticism; and a throne is then assigned to him next to that of his last-born brother. The inauguration finished, the seventy Æons sink back into their periodic repose and chill silence of a hundred years. This was the last effusion, the swan-song of Denis, who died on the 29th of September, 1800, nine months after his ideal inspection of the temple of the Æons. He provided in his will against the dissection of his body.

John Baptist von Alxinger was born at Wien on the 24th of January 1755, of noble parents: his father, a doctor of laws, officiated as consistorial counsellor to the bishop of Passau. Alxinger studied under the celebrated Eckhel, who had the care of the imperial cabinet of medals, and imbibed in this society a love of the details and illustrations of classical studies. Heir to a liberal patrimony, though bred to the bar he attended with little sedulity to his profession: he acquired, however, a doctor's degree, and the rank of aulic counsellor; but withdrew progressively from practical to literary occupations. The court of Vienna, with a polite regard for his inclinations, proposed to him to undertake not so much the management as the superintendence of the imperial theatre, a salaried office, which he executed tastefully, and held during the three years preceding his decease. A nervous fever carried him off in May 1797, at the early age

of forty-two: aware of his approaching end, he bequeathed his skull to Dr. Gall, the founder of phrenology.

The poetic effusions of Alxinger, which had appeared singly and successively in various periodic magazines, were first collected in 1784; and a second volume appeared in 1794. Beside these occasional verses, and a translation of Florian's *Numa,* he composed three epic poems on chivalrous subjects, namely, Doolin of Maynz, 1787; Bliomberis,* 1791; and Richard Lion-heart, 1796. Wieland had been the author's model; and it was hoped for a time that the imitator would also assert a permanent reputation; but his fame as a poet, which was perhaps favoured by his rank and his virtues, has waned not waxed. It is now perceived that often his fable is ill-constructed, his style wants grace, his exuberance is trailing, his interest sags, and that the splendid picturesque colouring which Wieland so dazzlingly throws over every object of description, fades into misty dimness on the canvas of his copyist.

The private virtues of Alxinger, his noble generosity, his affectionate soul, so much more than atone for some intemperate sallies of his early years, and place him so high among men, that one covets for him a more eminent station as a poet.

Lorenz Leopold Haschka, an Austrian, became for a time remarkable by some odes, which aped the manner of Klopstock, without however displaying that

* The fable of Bliomberis, (which is probably a Norman corruption of the English name Bloomsbury,) is given at length in the second volume of the Tales of Yore, printed for Mawman in 1810, and is the most adapted for English refashionment.

force of thought snd feeling, which were attained by his master. He was liberally patronized by his friend the poet Alxinger, who made him a present of 10,000 florins.

Karl Julius Fridrich also flourished and published at Wien, in 1786, a volume of *Situations*, as they were entitled. They resemble dramatic soliloquies on some topic which engages the poet's contemplative attention. Perhaps the best of them is that entitled *The Hero's Monument*, and records the self-immolation of a prince Leopold, who was drowned at Frankfort on the Oder, in attempting to rescue some humble individuals, from being swept away by an inundation.

Aloys Blumaner was born the 21st of December, 1755, at Steyer in Austria, entered the order of Jesuits in 1772, and gave for a time private lessons. After the suppression of the order, he became licenser of the press, or censor as it was called, and he acquired some share in a bookseller's concern. He died in 1798, in the forty-fourth year of his age.

His poems, which first appeared at Wien in 1782, contain the Praise of Printing, an Address to the Devil, a Panegyric of the Ass, and a tragedy, Erwina of Sternheim; but his most celebrated production is the Æneid burlesqued, of which he lived to complete only nine books. The death of Dido has been quoted, no doubt for its merit, by M. Bernays, in his convenient and comprehensive *German Poetical Anthology*, London, 1829; an abridgement of it is attempted here.

THE DEATH OF DIDO.

Night, in her full-dress mourning garb,
  Stalk'd slowly to the palace;
And through the queen's apartment came,
But brought no hartshorn drops, or dram,
  To quiet her wild sallies.

As all creation always mourns
  When titled people suffer;
The very bull-frogs in the marsh
Were heard in croaks more loud and harsh
  To pity, or to huff her.

The sky put crape about his hat,
  The clouds began to weep,
The owls rehears'd a requiem,
The ravens try'd to echo 'em,
  The wind sigh'd wondrous deep.

Her very furniture partook
  The general consternation;
The bedstead first a creak began,
The toilet sigh'd, the close-stool pan
  Repeats the lamentation.

Though but the old moon's waning horns
  Before the window linger,
Poor Dido fancy'd she beheld
Pygmalion's angry ghost, who held
  A halter on his finger.

"Ah, grin not, griesly shade, at me;
  I 'm reading Werter's sorrows:
I come to share thy second bed;
I know my winding sheet is spread;
  I ask for no to-morrows."

Then from her bosom the sad queen
A stout black ribband drew;
Oft she had coil'd it with her nail
Around Æneas's pig-tail,
When she tied up his cue.

Round her own neck she twin'd it now,
And made a slipping noose;
And to the tester of the bed
Fasten'd the two ends overhead,
And slipt her high-heel'd shoes.

" Dear ribband, once my lover's pride,
Be now at last my own."
And then she kick'd away the stool.—
Her sister thought her a great fool,
But durst not cut her down.

This is not, in my judgement, the best part of the poem: the visit to Anchises in the Elysian fields, where he keeps a public house and sells draughts of Lethe, and the prophecy of the future papal government of Rome, have more satiric merit: but Blumauer had not formed his plan, when he undertook his work. He begins with Juno, and the heathen gods and goddesses; but he afterwards converts Æneas to christianity, and makes him vow a monastery to St. Florian. This portion of the fable, in which catholic superstitions are admirably held up to ridicule, has chiefly contributed to keep alive the popularity of a poem, which could only have appeared at Vienna during the sway of Joseph II.

Instead of sending Æneas to Italy, there " *den Vatican zu gründen*,"[3] (book I, stanza iv,) perhaps it would

[3] " To found the Vatican."—So Blumauer parodies the line: " Tantæ molis erat Romanam condere gentem."

have been wiser to have made saint Peter himself the hero of the story; and to have narrated his pretended journey to Rome with the appropriate embellishments of christian mythology. Saint Nicholas might raise the wind as well as Æolus, and saint Mary the Egyptian, without any loss of reputation for chastity, might receive the apostle with all the hospitality of a Dido. The *Recognitions* of Clemens would have supplied many poetic incidents arrangeable in a manner analogous to the disposition of Virgil's fable, and equally open to the admission of those parodies, which constitute the chief felicities of Blumauer's travesty.

§ 8.

Life of Wieland.

Some persons are to be found in every land, whose individual progress resembles that of the community. Starting into life with the average culture of the better classes of their countrymen, able to keep pace with the course of literature and of event, attentive to surrounding nature, and using acute powers of observation and reflection to the last, they undergo personally the same series of changes as the public mind itself, represent all throughout the spirit of the whole, and leave off where they leave their country. Of such men the lives are peculiarly instructive; they form an epitome of the general history; a nation reads its own memoirs in their annals: like delicately suspended needles, they enable others to steer, and indicate the invisible magnetic currents of a world.

Wieland was a being of this class; and, independently of his eminence, fertility, and beauty, as a writer, he deserves notice as the ready pupil of all the coëval philosophy. By the calm wisdom of his disinterested philanthropy, he had insensibly acquired the confidence of the entire party of continental liberalists, whether writers or statesmen. The genius of Europe visited in his book-room, and delivered oracles from the lips of his bust: hostile sovereigns became com-

petitors for his approbation: and Napoleon and Alexander equally courted his sanction of their views. Raised by a voluntary and informal but efficacious and understood delegation into the papal chair of philosophy, he almost swayed nations by the pure influence of preaching to them their real interests.

At Biberach in Swabia, Christopher Martin Wieland was born, on the 5th of September 1733, in a parsonage-house called Holzheim, which his father inhabited near the Riess, a streamlet now become classical. Biberach is a free corporation-town, in which the Catholics and Lutherans have equal rights, and use the same church alternately; and Wieland's father was the Lutheran minister. He undertook the entire education of his son, for which his studies at the University of Halle had qualified him: but, with the usual solicitude of parental affection, he bestowed too much toil on the pupil, began his lessons when the child was only three years old, and forced by this hot-house confinement a premature growth of knowledge.

The boy was admired as a prodigy, and in his seventh year was reading Nepos: but he had incurred the oppressed feeling of those who are not suffered to expand, had contracted a shy lonesomeness of disposition, and apparently wanted the activity, the readiness, and the spirit of competition which are possessed by boys accustomed to bustle through a crowd. In his thirteenth year, Virgil and Horace were his pocket-companions; he was already familiar with Cicero; and he had not only begun to make German verses, especially hymns, but had planned an epic poem on the Destruction of Jerusalem. The mystically pious turn of his father was giving to all his ideas a religious direction.

At the age of fourteen, he was first exposed to the conflicts of public and social education; being then sent to the high school at Klosterbergen, near Magdeburg, at that time superintended by the Abbot Steinmetz, whose reputation as a teacher was great, and whose evangelical tone accorded with the sentiments of Wieland's father. In consequence of the popularity of this institution, especially in the Prussian states, the school-house had been lately enlarged: the discipline, also, had become unremitting; and devotional exercises formed a laborious part of the employment of the numerous pupils. The young Wieland here made a rapid progress in Greek, and grew remarkably fond of Xenophon, whose Cyropædia was the study of his class: but he took less part than others in the sports of his school-fellows, their play-ground being to him rather a show than an arena. Adelung, afterwards the celebrated glossologist, was one of the scholars with whom he formed a permanent friendship. During his leisure-hours, he applied to English literature, and read the Spectator, and Shaftesbury's Characteristics. All-curious, too, at this time, he peeped into some libertine books, but felt compunction after the indulgence. Indeed his conscientiousness was extremely sensible, whatever were his topics of self-reproach: "how often," he says, "I almost bathed in tears of contrition, and wrung my hands sore; I would fain but could not fashion myself into a saint."

When seventeen years old, Wieland left school, and passed some months at Erfurt with a relation named Baumer; who gave him instructions, and advised him, as his lungs were weak, to abandon the intention of taking orders, and to study the law. In the year following he returned home, and obtained

the reluctant permission of his father to prepare for college on this new plan.

Sophia von Gutterman, the daughter of a physician at Augsburg, a young lady of beauty and intellect, was now staying at Biberach, and visited at the house of Wieland's father. Two or three years older than this youth, who was still treated as a school-boy, and debarred by a specific engagement from any prospect of alliance with him, she saw neither danger nor impropriety in walking out frequently with a lad whose talents and accomplishments she could discern and appretiate: but Wieland fell enthusiastically in love with her. One Sunday, when his father had been preaching from the text 'God is love,' he accompanied Sophia after service into the fields; said that he thought a warmer discourse might have been inspired by the topic; and began to declaim in a rhapsodical phraseology, recollected or modified from Plato's dialogues. "You may imagine," says Wieland's own narrative, "whether I spoke coldly when I gazed in her eyes, and whether the gentle Sophia heard unpersuaded, when she looked benignly at me. In short, neither of us doubted the rectitude of my system: but Sophia expressed a wish, probably because she thought my delivery was too lyrical, that I would put down my ideas in writing. As soon as I left her, I was at my desk, and endeavoured to versify my theory." The fruits of this enthusiastic stroll were the lines entitled *The Nature of Things*, which form a conspicuous part of Wieland's first publication; the poem was dilated afterwards, but the substance originated at the time mentioned.

Term now drew nigh; Sophia was returning to her friends; the Platonic lovers separated; and Wie-

land proceeded in 1751, to the college of Tübingen, a cheap and not a celebrated university. The professors did not attract his attention, and he shut himself up in his room to write verses. While a student there in 1752, he printed his earliest volume of poems, which are chiefly didactic: *The Nature of Things*, the *Anti-Ovid*, the *Moral Epistles*, and some *Sacred Stories*, being of the number. As they were adapted to the state of the reading world at that period, and superior to the extant German poetry of the same kind, they excited some sensation, which has since diminished.

At Tübingen, Wieland also began an epic poem in Ossianic prose, entitled *Arminius, or Germany freed*, which has been translated into English. He sent the manuscript of the first five cantoes of this epopea, without his name, to Bodmer, the conductor of an eminent Swiss Review, soliciting the critical opinion of this literary patriarch; who thought well of the specimen; and, having shewn it to Hagedorn and others, who corroborated his judgement, he printed a complimentary acknowledgement to his unknown correspondent. Wieland then named himself; and Bodmer invited the young genius to pass the vacation at his house near Zurich. He complied with the proposal, in October, 1752, and beheld the dwelling of Bodmer, adapted for a temple of the Muses. Situated at the foot of a hill, between the town and the country, it was retired without being lonely; a vineyard, bounded at top by fig-trees, rose at the back of the garden; the Uto glittered in front; and a magnificent landscape of city, lake, and mountain, embosomed the modest residence. To Wieland was assigned an apartment which Klopstock, already known to fame, had occupied in

the year before. Within view, or a walk, were to be seen traces or ruins of the dwellings of Owe, Warte, Husen, and other poets of the Swabian period, who had founded the romantic literature of Germany; and whose manuscript remains, collected and preserved by the care of Rudiger Maness of Zurich, were now about to be edited by Bodmer. Visits to and from the literary men of the neighbourhood varied the domestic circle, of which Gesner, the author of the Idyls, often formed a part: but Breitinger, a canon of Zurich, was the one of Bodmer's friends who showed most attention to Wieland; and in a dedication addressed to them jointly, the latter has recorded an enduring sense of their kindness.

Bodmer, who had lost a wife and children, was glad of an habitual companion; and he could also employ the labor of Wieland profitably in critical animadversion, and contributions to periodic publications. Insensibly, the stay was prolonged, and arranged on a footing of mutual advantage. Wieland, quite in his element, and delighted with his new independence, dropped the project of returning to college, devoted himself wholly to the cares of authorship, and managed an extensive literary correspondence, which included the conspicuous names of Haller, Gleim, Hagedorn, Gellert, Klopstock, and Sulzer. His attachment to Bodmer, the author of his comforts, was signalized by a panegyrical analysis of the Noah of that writer, which displays less of the sagacity of justice than of the partiality of friendship.

With Bodmer the great recipe for composition was to transplant from foreign writers all that he could employ in his native tongue. "My own talent for stealing," says Wieland jocosely in one of his letters,

"was evolved and cultivated under him: there is much of the echo in my nature; and I never read a book with delight, but that, for a long time afterwards, my imagination was endeavouring to reproduce a similar plan of fable, or similar efforts at expression." One of his poetic works that was strongly tinctured with this imitative spirit was his volume of *Epistles from the Dead to the Living*, published in 1753; when he had just been reading Mrs. Rowe's *Friendship in Death*. Yet, if more of plagiarism than of invention be found in the matter, and if Klopstock's Elegies taught the style, it is by copying fine art that authors, like painters, may best learn to produce it. Wieland's *Trial of Abraham*, however, (published in 1755,) is an imitation of Bodmer's manner in which the resemblance extends to the faults. *Sympathies, Vision of a World of innocent Men, Hymns* in verse, and *Psalms* in prose, are other writings of this date; and, in the dedication prefixed, Wieland holds up to public animadversion some odes of Uz, which he was destined afterwards to outstrip in lascivious delineation. In some poetical epistle, Uz had ventured to yawn over the *Trial of Abraham*. Gleim, without any other provocation than his Anacreontics, was likewise chidden in the solemn tone of ecclesiastic displeasure; so completely was Wieland still an adherent of the ascetic morality and somewhat bigoted intolerance of Bodmer and his set. Indeed, those passages in the *Sympathies* which inveigh against the libertinisms of literature are too eloquent not to have been sincere; although, when stationed as an appendix to the later works of Wieland, they are read with the loud laugh of irony. 'He pities Petrarch, for speaking of his Laura with an idolatry to which no human excellence can be entitled

from man; he laments that the sublime genius of Pindar had been squandered on the decoration of a heathen and profane mythology; and he adds, that, whoever did not consider indifference to religion as an honor, was bound in duty infinitely to prefer the feeblest spiritual hymns of the ecclesiastic poets, to the seductive imagery of the finest odes of Uz or Gleim.' Bodmer was enraptured with this pious tone, and described Wieland in his Review as "protected by the seraph Eloa, who with sheltering wings scatters inspiration over him, and reaches to him a harp to which the souls of men, and even the rolling spheres, must listen."

In 1753, Wieland was invited by Professor Müchler to undertake some academic situation connected with the education of select noble pupils, and in consequence drew up a plan of the intended academy, which however was eventually relinquished: but the sketch was preserved among some fugitive pieces printed in 1758, and probably occasioned at a later period the idea of Wieland being made preceptor to the Duke of Saxe-Weimar. In the *Letters of Literature*, Lessing, who was the best prose-writer of the Germans, criticised this sketch, and censured the style of the author as redundant, finical, and overrun with Gallicisms: the remark was not lost; a reformation ensued, and Wieland's first good prose may be dated from this wholesome severity.

In 1756 occurred the seven years' war of Germany, which gave importance to public opinion and to its literary heralds. The catholic writers embraced the cause of Maria Theresa: but, as the Prussian monarch was an adherent and patron of the French free-thinking, an alliance insensibly took place between protest-

antism and philosophy, which liberalized the Prussian clergy, and shook the pillars of orthodoxy. The frequent idleness of the camps and garrison-towns formed a new set of readers; the mess-room became an important tribunal of literary appretiation; and books of amusement were multiplied, in which a lascivious turn prevailed, and which were welcomed in the colleges as much as in the barracks. The desultory anarchy, also, which rendered literary success independent of any metropolitan verdict, favoured a variety and an originality of manner among the different writers, which baffled the rules of criticism, and often bestowed on caprice the laurel-wreath of genius. Wieland, in common with other protestants, was a well-wisher to the cause of Frederic II, composed a loyal poem on Wille's statue of the King, and gradually imbibed the cast of opinion that was prevalent among the Prussian writers: but he was principally occupied at this time about an epic poem, to be intitled *Cyrus*, which he began in German hexameters. With Xenophon for his ostensible guide, the court of Babylon was probably to have shadowed forth that of Vienna, and the hero to have represented Frederic the Great. After having completed five cantoes, which were printed, the poet grew tired, and desisted; and his readers have not much wondered, or much grieved, at his fatigue.

Already in 1754, Wieland had quitted his host in order to take separate lodgings, having felt some restraint from the perpetual interference of Bodmer with his employments; and being inclined to give private lessons in Greek to some pupils of family, whom he could not so well receive at the apartment of a friend. A band of players having come to Zurich

in 1758, he attended the theatre with eagerness, formed an acquaintance with the manager Ackerman, was solicited by him for something new, and translated for him Rowe's *Lady Jane Gray*. The tragedy, which had been slightly altered, was suffered to pass as an original; it succeeded, and was printed; and it forms the first specimen of German drama in five-feet iambic blank verse: rimed Alexandrines having been hitherto employed, as in French tragedy. These players were proceeding to Berne; and, as Wieland, through the medium of his pupils, had the offer of a preceptorship there in the house of M. Sinner, he determined to leave Zurich. He next attempted, unsuccessfully, an original tragic drama, founded on the story of *Clementina of Poretta*, from Sir Charles Grandison; and another on the story of *Araspes and Panthea*, which was not accepted by the players, but was afterwards expanded and published separately as a romance in dialogue. He was more fortunate in refashioning Lesage's *Pandora*. At Berne, Wieland became personally known to Dr. Zimmermann, the author of a work on Solitude, with whom he corresponded; and he visited, perhaps from sensual motives, perhaps out of mere literary curiosity, at the lodgings of Julia Bondeli, the acquaintance of Rousseau; to whose declining charms M. Gruber ascribes the power of having occasioned in Wieland 'a more than friendly attachment.'

From Berne he was suddenly called in the year 1760 to his native city; the town-clerkship having become vacant, and the corporation of Biberach, without any solicitation on his part, having nominated Wieland to the office. The confidence of fellow-citizens is peculiarly flattering, because it reposes on long familiarity;

and, as the situation offered if not a liberal yet an honourable independence, Wieland accepted the place, and undertook its laborious duties. His return to Biberach, however, was not free from disappointment. Sophia, to whose hand he might now have aspired, was become the wife of M. Laroche, a secretary of Count Stadion: many years had not elapsed before he discovered that the necessary duties of office made grievous inroads on his leisure; and the inglorious comforts of competency appeared ill exchanged for the precarious earnings of literary publicity. In a letter dated 1763, he compares Biberach with San Marino; describes the triviality of those legal records which formed his morning task, and of those quadrille parties which his patrons expected him to join in the afternoon; laments that he is as much without society as Milton's Adam among the beasts of paradise; and adds that his only tolerable hours are those which he can snatch from business and from company to devote to composition. In one respect, however, this situation was of moral use; having no one on whom he could lean, he gradually acquired an upright and self-supported character. Hitherto, with the suppleness of a cameleon, he had too much imitated the hues of his acquaintance, and had cultivated the arts of ingratiation with some sacrifice of the dignity of independence: but he now first became himself; and his native tinge was slowly perceived to be very different from that which he reflected, or assumed, while in the circle of his Swiss connections.

A translation of Shakspeare was at this period the employment of Wieland's leisure; and, between the years 1762 and 1766, he published (in eight volumes) the twenty-two principal plays. He seems to have

used Pope's edition, and often leaves out the feeble passages, there placed between dotted commas as supposed interpolations of the players. He received of the bookseller two dollars per sheet for the job. Eschenburg republished this version in 1775, with corrections, and added the fourteen omitted pieces.

At Warthausen, about three miles from Biberach, on an eminence which overlooks a valley stretching toward the Danube, stands a proud mansion belonging to the noble family of Stadion; and hither the old Count Frederic, now a widower, who had been Austrian ambassador at the court of George the Second, but was retiring from the exertions of public life, came in his seventieth year, at the close of 1763, to reside. With him dwelt his former secretary Laroche, to whom the stewardship of his Swabian manors was now intrusted; and Laroche was of course accompanied by his wife, the Sophia of Wieland. Indeed, they almost supplied the place of a son and daughter to the old Count, and were the companions of his table and the helpmates of his infirmity. Through the friendship of Sophia, Wieland was induced to visit often at Warthausen; and, finding her happy in the protection of a man of merit, and surrounded by amiable children, the fruits of a marriage of seven years, he soon acquiesced in that brotherly feeling which fate and nature (their grandmothers had been sisters) seemed to have predestined for the quality of their attachment. He was also made welcome by the old Count, who felt the value, in a rural solitude, of so accomplished a guest. An experienced courtier, who had long moved in the first circles of Europe, this nobleman was formed by exquisite politeness, by his ready talent and fund of anecdote; by his penetrating

observation, and by those luxurious appendages, which decorate the exterior of opulence, to make a strong and progressive impression on the young poet, to whom his conversation revealed a new and higher world. Still this impression had at first more of admiration than complacence. Wieland's scheming philanthropy was often thwarted and chilled by the practical mistrust and sarcastic good sense of the Count and Laroche; his sentimental enthusiasm was made to collapse by many mortifying sneers; and he incurred something of that unwelcome flinch which the touch of egotism gives to benevolence. Under other names, Wieland paints the change which at this time his own mind was silently undergoing; where Agathon unwillingly discovers a sister in his beloved Psyche, Sophia floated in his thought, and where the religious tenets in which he had been educated are combated by the arguments of an epicurean, Count Stadion was sitting to him for Hippias.

In this circle, Wieland first acquired that tone of the great world, and that art of saying bold things with urbanity, which enabled him to become the classic of the gentlemen of Germany, and to lift up in courts the voice of freedom. Count Stadion's library included the select literature of Europe, especially its modern philosophy; and he had himself deeply imbibed the spirit of an age intent on the overthrow of prejudice. In the fashionable world, laxity of principle is often professed for the sake of living among the licentious without offending their self-love; and so Wieland perceived in this family. The moral tolerance proclaimed to others was not needed as a personal apology; egotism was but the pretext for a luxury which acted as the handmaid of beneficence;

morality was exercised without moroseness; and the kind affections were indulged within the limits of the beautiful and the good. The married daughters of Count Stadion came occasionally to visit at Warthausen. At these times the Muses redoubled their efforts to enliven the family-circle; poems of Wieland yet in manuscript were read aloud for their amusement; and the story of *Diana and Endymion* is noticed as one of the pieces so rehearsed. It contains passages to which English ladies would hesitate at listening; but probably the poet knew where to skip: or perhaps in southern countries the married women less affect severity; and, at a time when the court of France gave the tone to Europe, and received it from Madame de Pompadour, the novels of Crebillon and the metrical tales of Grecour were to be found on fashionable toilettes. Certainly a loose cast prevailed in the literature of the times, which Wieland could imitate in his *Comic Tales* without forfeiting the suffrage of the genteel world. The ladies at Warthausen not only fancied poetry, but were remarkably fond of fairy-tales, and gave occasion to those studies which excited the composition of *Don Sylvio of Rosalva*, a novel printed in 1764. The *Ricciardetto* of Dumouriez, a French translation from the Italian of Fortiguerra, had pleased in Count Stadion's family, and probably suggested to Wieland his modern *Amadis*, which was not published until 1771. This burlesque epopea was successful, but has outlived its popularity: it appeared when the French writers had made a conquest of the taste of the German courts; and, by this accommodation of manner, Wieland gradually succeeded in regaining for Germany and the German language the patronage of its princes.

Laroche having a clerical friend named Brechter, for whom he wished to obtain some small piece of preferment, Wieland undertook to canvas in his behalf the corporation of Biberach, and obtained from the mayor an appointment of his candidate. Some part of the corporation, however, soon became alarmed at the liberal or the heretical tone of Brechter's preaching or conversation, and made formal representations to the mayor, requiring that he should rescind the nomination. The strife became warm in the corporate body; some harsh and calumnious words were used; a sort of riot was threatened, to prevent Brechter from ascending the pulpit; and Wieland, in his official capacity, accompanied by the mayor and peace-officers, led Brechter through the assembled congregation to the desk. This incident obliged Wieland to break with the orthodox party, with whom he had hitherto kept terms, but who now made some attempt, through the courts of law at Vienna, to deprive him of his official situation. The question, however, was decided in his favor about the close of 1764. This affair is remarkable as having supplied the real basis of a narrative included in the *Abderites;* where, under Greek names, and with a most dexterous substitution of incidents that were probable under Greek institutions, much personal satire is levelled against the corporation of Biberach. Count Stadion took amiss some part of Wieland's conduct in these matters;—probably his courageous assertion of the independent rights of the corporation, over which the court of Vienna claimed some sovereignty; and Wieland says, in a letter dated 1766, " Madame Laroche n'est plus ici: elle a suivi son mari et son maitre à Bonigheim, terre du Comte de Stadion: nous ne nous écrivons

plus, parceque j'ai eu le malheur d'encourir la disgrace de son Excellence, en faisant mon devoir et rien de plus."

The year 1765 was allotted to the composition and completion of Agathon, the earliest work of Wieland to which he himself assigns a classical rank: it appeared in 1766. His previous productions he considers as juvenile efforts, made while his mind was yet in the progress of education, and he had prejudices to lose as well as principles to acquire: but, in the Agathon, his philosophy already appears systematized and mature; and his peculiar talent for psychological observation and mental anatomy, is here advantageously displayed. In the intellectual progress of the hero, a secret history is given, under a Greek garb, of conflicts which had passed in the author's own soul.

In the autumn of 1765, Wieland married Miss Hillenbrandt, the daughter of a merchant at Augsburg; a lady more remarkable, it is said, for a pleasing person and for domestic virtues, than for much accomplishment of mind. She looked up to her husband with a sort of worship, but is believed to have been scantily versed in his writings. Wieland being somewhat choleric, and often provoked by little things into bursts of angry eloquence, his wife bore those explosions of temper with such gentle patience that any bystander was filled with real admiration; even Wieland himself usually changed sides before he had done raving, and turned his own zeal into ridicule:—many of his felicities of diction were thus struck out at a heat.

Idris and Zenide, a poem in the looser manner of Ariosto, occupied the author during the first months of his marriage: five cantos were printed, and five

more were promised: but, like the four Facardins of Count Hamilton, this fairy-tale remains a fragment. The earliest classical production of Wieland in verse, his *Musarion*, was undertaken next: it narrates a philosophic conversation; and, of all didactic poems, it has most dramatic vivacity and grace of diction. It appeared in 1768.

In a letter to Riedel, dated 1765, Wieland mentions that he had hired a garden out of Biberach, having a summer-house which commanded a fine rural prospect. "Here," adds he, "I pass my afternoons with no other society than the Muses; and, when I rise for some minutes from my task, I snuff the odor of new-mown hay, or see the boys bathe, or watch the retters of flax. At a distance, I catch the churchyard in which the bones of my fathers and probably my own will one day repose together; or, in the rich confusion of the remoter landscape, I single out the new white castle of Horn, then sit down again,—and rime."

In 1769, Wieland, who had then two daughters, received from the elector of Mayntz an invitation to become Principal, or first professor of law, at the University of Erfurt, with a salary of six hundred dollars, and the title of privy-counsellor. This offer was transmitted by Baron Grossschlag, the elector's *arbiter elegantiarum*, but was probably due to the commendation of count Stadion; who had connections with Mayntz, and whose friendship for Wieland in reality out-lasted his ostensible favor. With the skill of a courtier, he was contriving to withdraw from Biberach the champion of an independence obnoxious at Vienna, and yet to give a more adapted station to his late guest and companion. Wieland

considered the offer, and accepted it. If the situation at Biberach was less precarious, that of Erfurt seemed an opening to further advancement; and, if but little was added to his pecuniary income, yet the increase of leisure, the entire devotion of his time to literature, and the nobler circle in which he was to move, had claims to his preference.

On arriving at Erfurt, Wieland had to lament the recent removal of his relation and early instructor, Baumer, to a mineralogical lectureship in Saxony. He moreover found an University in decay, with sinecure professors unlocking at term-time their neglected halls, looking round for auditors in vain, and returning in contented silence with their books and papers unopened. Only five-and-twenty students were nominally attached to the entire institution. Wieland, however, did not despair; four times in a week, for about an hour and a half, the lectures of the new Principal, *On the State of Nature and Society*, were henceforth to be heard: they aroused and attracted attention; and the number of students was doubled. Among the pupils drawn thither by the celebrity of Wieland, may be distinguished Heinse, the author of *Ardinghello*. Some dissertations inserted in the fourteenth volume of the collective works, *On Rousseau's Idea of our original Condition*, *On the perpetual Amelioration of human Society*, and *On the supposed Declension of the human Race*, are detached portions of these lectures, and probably comprehend all that was most original in them; of the borrowed matter, Iselin's *Ephemeris of Humanity* supplied a remarkable share. That philosophic and original, though not very decent, novel, entitled *Koxkox and Kikequetzel*,[4] or *the Mexican Paradise Lost*, is a

[4] A translation of this novel occurs in the third volume of the "Tales of Yore, 1810."

work of this period, and is strongly sprinkled with the opinions advanced in the lectures. Combabus, the best of Wieland's metrical Comic Tales, was also composed at Erfurt; it preserves an agreeable medium between the Greek and the French manner of narration.

In his correspondence, Wieland complains of the society of Erfurt. With Professor Meusel, the compiler of a biographic dictionary of German authors, and with others of his colleagues, he was indeed in a certain degree intimate: but the house, which with most solicitude and splendor of hospitality collected all the wit and fashion in the place, was alas! also distinguished for a licentiousness of character from which Wieland, the husband and the father, practically shrunk back, however tolerant his theoretic principles of morals may appear; and he the more scrupulously confined himself habitually within his domestic circle, because he had been accompanied to Erfurt by a son of his friend Laroche, who was intended to live in the family as a kind of private pupil, and prematurely to assert a privilege of attending the college-lectures.

Young Laroche corresponded with his father, who had been placed by Count Stadion in some public office at Vienna, and who was ambitious of recommending himself to the heir of Maria Theresa as an apologist of the reformations contemplated in the ecclesiastic order. Wieland received through his pupil early information of the official projects of reform, corrected in manuscript Laroche's pamphlet on the suppression of monastic orders, and determined personally to assist in preparing the public mind for the impending innovations. With this view, he composed

the *Golden Mirror*, a novel in Crebillon's manner; which, under oriental names, satirizes European abuses. The fourth chapter sketches the idea of a beautiful religion, and may retain a classical value: but the numerous allusions to temporary circumstances have lost their interest; the praise prepared for Joseph the Second, under the name of Tiphan, has been imperfectly earned; and the reader finds not enough of vivacity in the diction, or of action in the fable, to prevent tedium. Some *Free-spirited Dialogues* on the abolition of convents were also issued by Wieland; and a satire on the missionary spirit, entitled, *Travels of the Priest Abulfauaris into the Interior of Africa.* Of the political good that was likely to result from the liberal spirit of the Emperor Joseph, Wieland had formed enthusiastic hopes; and he seems to have anticipated a re-union of the Jewish, the Catholic, and the Protestant churches, on the principles of the anti-supernaturalist Unitarians.

In the neighbourhood of Erfurt dwelt a German princess, Anna Amalia; who had been since 1758 the widow of Ernest Augustus, Duke of Saxe-Weimar. Descended from the house of Guelph, and intrusted by her husband's will with the regency of the state during the minority of the heir, she enjoyed the dignity and patronage of a sovereign; and, like another Zenobia, she endeavoured to attract about her court men of literary celebrity. Her son, now sixteen years old, was considered to require superior tutorage, and she applied to her friend Baron Dalberg, governor of Erfurt, for advice in the choice. He was in consequence authorized to propose the situation to Wieland, at an allowance of one thousand dollars annually for the three years of expected active service, and a pen-

sion of six hundred dollars on retirement. Wieland having signified a disposition to accept the offer, the Dowager-Duchess applied to the Elector of Mayntz for leave that he might resign the chair of the University, and obtained for him a gracious release from that prior engagement: in consequence of which he removed in the autumn of 1772, to Weimar, where he was decorated immediately with the title of Aulic Counsellor.

Wieland was no sooner settled there than he felt himself in a welcome atmosphere, in a congenial situation. Repeatedly in his correspondence he boasts that, from this time forwards, he knew nothing of those attacks of hypochrondriasis which had previously at times interrupted his application, and saddened his solitary wanderings; and he places at forty the period of life at which a man is most adapted to execute a permanent work of literary art. To his pupil he gave lessons as assiduously as they could be administered to an heir of rank, who was much his own master; and he endeavoured to call in the aid of more attractive arts of instruction. For the seventeenth birth-day of the hereditary prince, he wrote an operatical interlude, which succeeded admirably on the stage, called *The Choice of Hercules*; of which the poetry may be compared with that of Comus, and of which the charming music was composed by Schweitzer. *Rosamond*, and *Midas*, were translated by Wieland from the English at this period for the stage of Weimar, and the fine serious drama of *Alcestes* was written. This is the earliest tragic opera extant in the German tongue; the poetry, though its greatest beauties are transplanted from Euripides, is admirable; and, though hastily ridiculed by Goethe, it taught him

the style of his own *Iphigenia*. The music by Schweitzer is allowed to rival the poetry; and the piece was nationally welcomed with enthusiasm, and repeated to peals of acclamation throughout Germany. An elegant dissertation on the theory of the operatical drama was prefixed to the text, which displays an epuration of the author's German style, the natural result of residence in Saxony.

At this time, Wieland had ample leisure; and he undertook in 1773 the publication of a monthly miscellany, or magazine, entitled the *German Mercury*, of which the form was in some degree copied from the then popular *Mercure de France*. It did not consist exclusively of lucubrations of his own, and he was especially assisted with literary notices: but, whatever he wrote henceforth, it was there first exhibited to public curiosity and criticism, and afterwards separately republished in a revised and amended state. This practice of first printing a sort of waste-paper edition of works that are intended for permanence, and of subsequently issuing them in a more splendid form, is of good example: it is preferable to the English habit of beginning with a quarto, and descending to an octavo, or duodecimo; because, on our plan, the best and finest copies have the worst text; and magnificent libraries contain but the crude, unfinished, incorrect sketches of our authors. The *German Mercury* included no selections from newspapers, which only keep alive a taste for trivial and trifling gossip: but it commented with Athenian freedom and urbanity on all the higher topics of European polished conversation. The effusions of literature, the productions of art, remarkable lives and political events, all the opinions and interests of men, were canvassed with

an exquisite sense of their proportionate and enduring importance, with comprehensive information and learning, with highly philosophic and cosmopolitical views, and with an attraction of manner which wanted indeed the rapidity and stimulancy of Voltaire, but not his various resources of imagination. Perhaps it may be conjectured that the correspondence of Grimm and Diderot was communicated to Wieland in the original manuscript, as it manifests much coincidence of attention and analogy of sentiment. It was this *Mercury* which in fact gained for Weimar the appellation of the German Athens; during more than twenty years, it remained the favourite journal of the cultivated classes of Germany; it selected and brought out the topics which were to occupy and to interest the fashionable and polished, in the other minor courts and cities; and it first gave the liberal tone of commentary, which was elsewhere to be felt but as an echo. Wieland was assisted in this work originally by Bertuch, then by Reinhold, next by Schiller, and finally by Böttiger, to whom in 1795 he transferred the exclusive editorship.

The hereditary prince, after the completion of his domestic education, quitted Weimar to visit France and Italy; and, on coming of age, he signified his gratitude to Wieland, by assigning to him an annuity of one thousand dollars, which exceeded the stipulated pension by four hundred. Charles Augustus had imbibed,—and this was not the slightest praise of his instruction,—a taste for merit, a virtuosity in human excellence, to employ his preceptor's phrase. An eager dilettante in celebrity, he was chiefly ambitious of decorating Weimar with a gallery of living geniuses; and, if in the statistical map of Europe this was an

inconsiderable place, it was not long to remain such in the intellectual map. Herder, the father of rational Scripture-criticism among the Germans, was called to be the ecclesiastical superintendant, or bishop, of this little metropolis; and, like another Paul of Samosata, he inculcated beneath mystical phrases unprejudiced philosophy. Painters were employed to decorate his cathedral; and Schweitzer, his chapel-master, embellished the public worship with choruses worthy of Handel. The theatre of Weimar, which had been burnt down in 1774, and had been rebuilt with singular elegance, was conducted wholly at the expense of the state; and the public, as in antient Rome, was admitted gratuitously. Goethe, the Euripides of Germany, was invited to become director of this playhouse; a situation which was made worthy of his acceptance, and was conferred together with an order of nobility. Henceforth, the lovers of the drama were no where so sure of a various and tasteful selection of pieces, of performers so picked even in the minor departments, and of costume and scenery so critically exact. Schiller was induced to try on this stage the most valued of his immortal productions, and at length to settle amid the applauding circle. Musæus, the novelist, and other minor authors, were led to reside at Weimar by the elegant resources of amusement which it supplied, among which may be classed the romantic walks of Etterburg opened to the public in the ducal grounds. As at Ferrara, under the house of Este, a refinement of the pleasures of man was here become the chief occupation of his rulers; and like Ferrara, Weimar was destined to bring forwards a second Ariosto.

When Wieland first came to reside in this capital,

he seems to have fancied that the court-etiquette was somewhat burdensome; and he ridicules, in his correspondence, the necessity of presenting himself at the ducal table in full dress and with a bag-wig, when perhaps no strangers were present. In occasional poems, he names the Dowager-regent *Olympia,* as if he had discerned something of loftiness in her demeanor: but, when she had laid down the regency, he uniformly praises her affability, calls her the soul of all the good society in Weimar, and notices her allotment to him of an apartment in her country residence at Tieffurt, where he was treated as one of the family. He had at first probably mistaken the official stateliness of the representative of sovereignty for distance of the heart; or his own ease of manner was progressive, and had produced reciprocity.

The *Fabliaux* of Wieland were composed during the earlier part of his residence at Weimar; and they form a classical volume of Metrical Tales; which no other European nation had rivalled. The themes are mostly derived from story-books of chivalry, such as *Gyron le Courtois,* the *Lays de l'Oiselet,* the *Contes de le Grand,* and the *Pentamerone:* but the most fortunate of them all is the story of the *King of the Black Isles,* from the *Arabian Nights.* Some are wholly of the author's invention: but these have less felicity of fable than those of which the plot was adopted or borrowed, and has only been rounded into a neat whole by a more dramatic arrangement of the incidents:—a copiousness carried to excess is their most frequent blemish.

These excellent narrations, however, were but preparatory exercises for the romantic epopæa which was to follow. *Oberon* first appeared in the *German Mer-*

cury for 1780, and was received at once with that transport of popularity which continues to accompany every republication of it. Unquestionably, indeed, it is the most beautiful modern poem which has appeared since the *Jerusalem* of Tasso; and, if it has less grandeur of fable, it communicates to the marvellous personages and incidents a more natural and illusive colouring. The story of January and May is not well placed in the mouth of Scherasmin; nor has it sufficient dignity of tone for the general elevation of the poem, on which account Mr. Sotheby omits the passage in his version: but, on the whole, in point both of plan and style, this most attractive and attaching composition is a master-piece. Wieland felt that he should never surpass it, and henceforwards declined to write poetry: he did indeed publish afterwards a pre-existing translation of Horace's Epistle to the Pisos, and concluded rather than completed his *Clelia and Sinibald:* but he was careful not to write himself down by exciting attention to subsequent inferiority.

He next undertook a translation of Lucian's works from the Greek, which was published in 1788 and 1789, and forms six octavo volumes. The translation is alike distinguished for its learning and its elegance; notes are added, beautifully illustrative of the manners of the times, and of the historic allusions contained in the text; and a good biography of the Greek author is prefixed. All classical students must be glad to be able to consult this excellent commentary on a writer, who is destined in every age to awaken some efficacious opposition to the incessant industry of superstition.

During the occupation of translating Lucian, the natural tendency of Wieland's mind to re-produce original imitations of those works of art, with the con-

templation of which he was actually engaged, became apparent. *Peregrinus Proteus,* a novel twice translated into our language, and better known here than the *Agathon,* was now composed; and it was soon followed by *Dialogues in Elysium,* and *Dialogues of the Gods.* These last agitate many questions originating in the French Revolution. The most splendidly fanciful and philosophically profound is the sixth, which dwells on the abolition of Paganism, so as to prepare the reader for the downfall of other dynasties of gods. Many argumentative dissertations on the French Revolution, that all-absorbing topic, filled the *Mercury* from 1790 to 1795, when Wieland relinquished the editorship, and sought a new employment for his leisure and imagination. The *Agathodæmon,* a romance which attempts a probable history of Philostratus's Apollonius of Tyana, was composed about the year 1795, and reveals the creed of the writer more than any of his works. His christianity is nearly that of Professor Paulus, who attempts to solve the evangelical phænomena without the hypothesis of supernatural interposition:—his theology is nearly that of the Philonic pantheists: he describes himself, under the name of his prophet, as 'perpetually conscious of the presence of the universal genius of nature, or soul of the whole, of the living provident father of all:'—and his psychology (though that is not defined in the Agathodæmon, but must be sought in a much earlier work, his *Liberty of Reasoning in Matters of Belief,)* admits 'the posthumous continuation of our own original being, with the consciousness of our own personality, and a progress to ever-increasing perfection, which will be modified by our behaviour in this life.'

Since their marriage in October, 1765, Wieland's

wife had borne him fourteen children: only nine of whom remained to him, when in 1782 he thus writes to Gleim:

'How gladly would I accept your invitation, and fly to you, and shake you by both hands, and talk over with you the days of our youth, and sun ourselves afresh in the aurora of literature: but a thousand silken bands bind me to Weimar. I am rooted into the ground here, and occupations that admit no delay press around me. Besides, how can I drag away my wife from her nine children, when the joint ages of the six youngest do not amount to twenty years? Our house is a little world, in which our presence and government cannot be spared. But you, my Gleim, a single man, might come hither, and amuse yourself with seeing these little elves creep one after another out of their lurking holes.'

In a letter to Sofia de la Roche, he says; 'My sweetest hours are those in which I see about me, in all their glee of childhood, my whole possy of little half-way things between apes and angels.'

Writing to Meister, in 1787, he observes: 'My wife is a model of every feminine and domestic virtue; free from the usual foibles of her sex, with a head unbiassed by prejudices, and a moral character that would do honor to a saint. The two-and-twenty years, during which I have lived with her, have passed, one and all, without my ever once wishing to have remained unmarried. On the contrary, her existence is so interwoven with mine, that I cannot spend a week from home without being attacked with the Swiss longing.' Elsewhere he says; 'I experience more and more that all true human happiness lies within the charmed circle of married domestic life. I become continually

more and more the man, and in that proportion happier and better. Labor is a pleasure to me because I am working for my children; and I am internally convinced that my calm trust in the hand which weaves the web of our destinies will not disappoint me or mine.'

The reigning duke, the prince Constantine, Goethe, and Gleim, were among the godfathers of his children; the dowager-duchess, and the duchess Louisa, among their godmothers. Wieland's mother came to spend her latter days of widowhood in his family, and died about the year 1790, under his roof.

M. Gösche, an eminent bookseller at Leipzig, contracted with Wieland in the year 1793 for a revised edition of his Collective Works, which were then estimated to fill thirty volumes, each of five hundred pages. The copy-right was purchased with liberality, and the publication executed with magnificence. A quarto edition with plates, an octavo edition, and a duodecimo edition, were issued at once; and every rank of society was thus accommodated with the choice of a copy proportioned to its habits of literary luxury. The sale did not disappoint expectation; a fourth edition became requisite; and Wieland had the gratification of placing all the favourite works of his genius in the hands of the rising generation, with the diction polished and the orthography reformed, with many prudent suppressions, many tasteful insertions, and many embellishing corrections. A law-suit was undertaken against M. Gösche, as having invaded the copy-right of prior publishers, but without success: the perpetual alterations being judged to constitute a fresh original title in the author to the new text so visibly emended.

During the progress of this reprint of Wieland's Collective Works, which occupied about four years, may be placed the zenith of his celebrity and comfort. His eldest daughter was already married satisfactorily to M. Reinhold, who at one time assisted in the *Mercur*, and afterwards became a college-professor. Two other daughters were now portioned off to Protestant clergymen, of the names of Schorcht and Liebeskind: these two sisters married in the same year, lost their husbands in the same year, and, being left in narrow circumstances, they both returned to their father's house with four children. A fourth daughter married a son of the poet Gesner; a connection which Wieland, who had been early, intimately, and uninterruptedly attached to the father, warmly approved. On the other hand, he was assailed by all *the miseries of celebrity:* every German nobleman who travelled, every foreigner who visited Germany, came to Weimar as a pilgrimage due to the shrine of genius, and came provided with some pretext for visiting Wieland. He had a great dislike to be called out of his book-room in his night-gown and slippers; and he complains bitterly, in his correspondence, of this incessant and impolite intrusion. This feeling had a principal share in leading him to wish for a situation more retired and less accessible; and, as his eldest son was now grown up, had a taste for rural economy, and was in search of a farm to conduct, he determined on the purchase of an estate at Osmanstadt, which appeared adapted to the wishes and to the accommodation of his whole household. Though the purchase-money exceeded the provided means of Wieland, the noble proprietor was willing to accept payment by instalments; and it was hoped that the *Letters of Aris-*

tippus, which were now on the stocks, would defray the demands. In 1798, Wieland removed to Osmanstadt: his family consisting of thirteen persons, himself, his wife, three sons, two single daughters, two widowed daughters, and four grand-children. Some alterations being requisite on the premises, the artists of Weimar volunteered their drawings, and the reigning duke deigned to inspect and to advise between their plans. He also sent from the ducal gardens the statue of a siren, to decorate the fountain in the court yard; and Osmantium, thus embellished, was engraved for the almanacs, and celebrated by the poets like another villa of Horace.

Sofia de la Roche, now a widow, came to visit Wieland at his new residence, and thus describes the habits of the family during her stay:

'On the fifteenth of July, 1799, after a separation of almost thirty years, I reached Wieland's house at evening, and embraced again the worthy friend of my youth, his wife, and four of his daughters. One of my six grand-daughters accompanied me, and being fatigued we retired early to rest: but I could not sleep; the tide of feelings and recollections rushed over me too vehemently: still I was in his house, and was happy. I heard him, before he went to bed, playing on his harpsichord, according to his custom; he was now rehearsing a Swiss tune which we had admired together at Biberach. The breakfast had an attractive neatness and simplicity: no servant attended: but one daughter brought a glass of buttermilk; another a plate of cherries, the toasted bread, and the home-made butter; and the young man presented to my Julia a handful of roses: we had seen him, while we were rising, employed in mowing the grass-plot in the

garden. During the forenoon, Mrs. Wieland led me to the dairy and the several objects of her superintendance, and shewed me the delicate produce of her spinning-wheel. Wieland himself conducted me to see his new-shorn flock, and told me what crops were to succeed the fragrant fields of beans and clover which I then beheld.

'He took me to spend a day with the Dowager-Duchess, at her residence in Tieffurt; Goethe was of the party, and agreed to dine with us next day at Osmanstadt. Then, indeed, I sat in a temple of the gods; while at the table, which was not additionally provided, I listened to these two patriarchs of German literature, addressing each other with the friendly *thou* and *thee* of the ancients, and discussing with polished frankness the men and books and events of the times. A bust of Count Stadion ornamented the mantle-piece: Goethe asked me whether it was a good likeness, analyzed its expression, and was almost immediately on a friendly footing with me, as if he too had been acquainted with us under that roof. I repeated to him an observation which I had heard Wieland make to the old Count, that all great men in the evening of life had sought a still retirement in the lap of nature. When the ladies withdrew to walk in the alley of lime-trees, Herder's daughter came to join us.

'Another of the delightful days that I passed here was that on which the duchess Amalia, in all her affability, came to see us, and, leaning on Wieland's arm, walked up and down the garden with us. On that same day, Herder and his wife joined our party at table, and brought with them John Paul Richter, a comparatively young man, of whose genius high opinions were entertained; and in the evening, when our

guests had retired, Wieland read to us a terrific dream written by this author. That day, too, was an interesting one, on which Wieland's name was to be inserted in the manorial books, and he gave a rural feast to his neighbours on becoming a fellow-tenant, his property being copy-hold. All the villagers came and spread themselves over the green, and partook in the open air of a rustic hospitality, and shook Wieland and his sons by the hand, and prayed God to bless him and his heirs; and they had music and a dance, and we joined in it, and sang and rejoiced until twilight. O may his felicity be perpetual! he so thoroughly deserves it.'

'Wieland,' says Goethe somewhere, 'was truly formed for the higher circles; the highest would have been his proper element; for, as he never wishes to domineer, or even to be at the head of the company, but takes a willing interest in any thing, and a temperate interest in every thing, he never requires the control of superior presence. His thoughts are always distinct and definable; his expression is clear; and, notwithstanding the comprehensive character of his knowledge, he is singularly prone to attend to present objects, and to dwell on the immediate topic of the day. Moreover, I do not know any man who is always so alive to every thing that is happily said by another, and so ready to make room for that which another wishes to throw into the conversation.'

In 1798, Wieland, in one of his *Dialogues between four Eyes*, ventured to foretell that the anarchy of France would seek its cure in military despotism, and propose *Bonaparte* as a temporary dictator. The event shewed that "long experience can attain to something like prophetic strain:" but some agent, probably, of

the British court, or some officious *quidnunc*, unable to conceive such sagacity of genius, imputed, in the newspapers, this suggestion to a private and hired concurrence with certain factious individuals at Paris. This illiberal denunciation had the unfortunate effect, for Wieland, of causing all the writers in the interest of those courts who were in alliance with Great Britain suddenly to assail him as an *illuminato*;—as one of the *ne plus ultra* revolutionists, for whom mere imprisonment was too mild a fate. The cry of the continental anti-jacobins was loud, was repeated from a thousand mouths, and exposed him to vulgar suspicion and to titled odium. It had effects yet more operative on his comforts and sources of well-being; it terrified the booksellers, and depreciated the selling value of his manuscripts, which were now more than ever necessary to his subsistence. The expenses of alterations at Osmanstadt were still undefrayed, and some instalments of purchase-money still undischarged. Movements of armies rendered property insecure, and lessened its price; ready money rose in value; the produce of the crops disappointed expectation; and it was only by mortgaging the land, at a great disadvantage, that the immediate demands on Wieland could be met. These were heavy sorrows, and they led the way to one still heavier. In 1801, his wife died. She was buried in a grove at the bottom of the garden, where he made a family vault, which was to include his own remains. One of his widowed daughters now undertook the care of the household: but it was too soon felt that the farms of citizens do not pay, and Wieland determined to let his land. Further instalments became due, and at length it was necessary to sell in proportion to the income of the new lease,

at a price much below the cost. In April, 1803, he visited for the last time the trees which he had planted round the grave of his wife, and abandoned Osmanstadt to its new proprietors, his finances much impoverished by this rural speculation.

In a letter to Bodmer, dated early in 1803, he thus tenderly depicts his state of feeling:

'Since the death of my wife, I have lost the love of existence; and the lustre which once shone on all things around me is bedimmed. I would fain withdraw my attention from a painful feeling, which especially seizes on me whenever I lie down or get up: but memory will be busy. Never since I was born have I loved any thing so much as my wife. If I but knew that she was in the room, or if at times she stepped in and said a word or two, that was enough; —my guardian angel had been near:—but, since she has been gone, my very labors fall off in spirit, and my writings please me no longer. Why could we not, like Philemon and Baucis, have died on one day?'

Wieland now returned to Weimar. The reigning Duke had provided for him a house opening into the grounds of the Duchess-Dowager, and enjoying a beautiful prospect. It was announced that Wieland was henceforth to form one of the household, and a place was assigned to him in the state-box at the theatre: an eagerness of welcome was expressed in every quarter; and Father Wieland, as they called him, was hailed on his return, after six years of absence, with every mark of gratulation. Goethe varied a decoration of his Torquato Tasso, to give opportunity for a plaudit of exultation on Wieland's first appearance in the playhouse:—Herder approached him with sincerer though less ostentatious friendship;—and Schiller became now

first an habitual acquaintance;—together with Meyer, the founder of the recent exhibitions of fine art. Above all, the reigning family, the dowager-duchess, the duke, and the princess his wife, redoubled their former attentions, with that generosity of heart which always discovers, in the adversity of a friend, some additional claims for him to be honoured as well as loved:—the whole house of Weimar showed themselves to be the nobles of humanity. Herder, however, did not live long after Wieland's return to Weimar;—they had agreed in disliking the Kantian philosophy, or jargon, which Goethe and Schiller patronized. It is the misfortune of longevity to survive its most valued friendships; and Wieland had moreover to lament the loss of the dowager-duchess, which rendered Tieffurt comparatively a solitude to him: but his former rooms were still open to him there during the summer-season, until he voluntarily exchanged them for an apartment at Belvedere. M. Gruber, who met him there, says that

'His walk was firm, not quick; it had much of dignity: he did not need for his support the Spanish cane which he carried: he was of more than middle stature, slim and thin, and his head bent forwards. In his countenance, it has been said, there was a mixture of the Faun and the Grace: but the lofty arched forehead, and Grecian profile, gave it an exalted expression of intellect. His eye was mild and placid: but an ironical smile often played on his lip. I accosted him, and congratulated him on the possession of so much activity at so advanced an age. He said that he himself wondered at it, as he had been a hot-house plant, reared within doors, too much nursed by women, and too much confined by study.'

In 1806 the progress of warfare had rendered Weimar a station of alarm, if not of danger; in 1808 the Congress of Erfurt was convened; and, in the October of that year, the assembled princes came for a few days to visit the court of Weimar. Napoleon brought with him a troop of French players, who borrowed the theatre, and on the sixth of October exhibited in it Voltaire's "Death of Cæsar." Wieland went to see this tragedy, in which Talma was to perform, and sat as usual in a private side-box of the second tier, reserved for the ducal family, to which he was considered as attached. Napoleon observed him there, and inquired who was the venerable old man with the black velvet *calotte*. This was the usual costume of Wieland; who, not liking to wear a wig, and being exposed by the want of hair to colds in the head, had adopted a small circular cap resembling that of the catholic priests. On being informed by the Prince-primate that this was Wieland, Napoleon expressed a wish to see him after the play, and he was accordingly ushered into the ball-room, which was intended to be the next place of rendezvous. In one of Wieland's letters, the following account is given of the interview:

'I had not been many minutes there before Napoleon came across the room toward us: the Duchess then presented me to him in form, and he addressed me affably with some words of compliment, looking me steadily in the face. Few persons have appeared to me so rapidly to see through a man at a glance. He instantly perceived that, notwithstanding my celebrity, I was a plain unassuming old man; and, as he seemed desirous of making for ever a good impression on me, he at once assumed the form best adapted to attain his end. I never saw a man in appearance calmer,

plainer, milder, or more unpretending. No trace was visible about him of the consciousness that he was a great monarch. He talked to me like an old acquaintance with his equal, and, which was very rare with him, chatted with me exclusively an entire hour and a half, to the great surprize of all who were present. At length, about midnight, I began to feel inconvenience from standing so long, and took the liberty of requesting his Majesty's permission to withdraw. "*Allez donc*," said he in a very friendly tone, "*bon soir*."

'The more remarkable traits of our interview were these.—The previous play having made Cæsar the subject of our conversation, Napoleon observed that he was one of the greatest characters in all history; and that indeed he would have been without exception the greatest, but for one blunder. I was about to inquire to what anecdote he alluded, when he seemed to read the question in my eye, and continued; "Cæsar knew the men who wanted to get rid of him, and he ought to have been rid of them first." If Napoleon could have read all that passed in my mind, he would have perceived me saying; *Such a blunder will never be laid to your charge.*—From Cæsar our conversation turned to the Roman people; and he praised warmly their military and their political system: while the Greeks, on the contrary, seemed to stand low in his opinion. The eternal contest between their little republics was not formed, he said, to produce any thing great: but the Romans were always intent on grand purposes, and thus created the mighty colossus which bestrode the world. I pleaded for the arts and literature of the Greeks: but he treated both with contempt, and said that they only served to make objects of dispute.

'He preferred Ossian to Homer. In poetry, he professed to value only the sublime, the energetic, and the pathetic writers, especially the tragic poets. Of Ariosto he spoke in some such terms as those which had been used by Cardinal Hippolito of Este; not aware, however, I think, that in doing this he was giving me a box on the ear. For any thing humorous he seemed to have no liking; and, notwithstanding the flattering friendliness of his apparent manner, he repeatedly gave me the idea of his being *cast from bronze.*

'At length, however, he had put me so much at my ease, that I asked him how it happened that the public worship, which he had in some degree reformed in France, had not been rendered more philosophic, and more on a par with the spirit of the times. "My dear Wieland," he replied, "worship is not made for philosophers; they believe neither in me nor in my priesthood. As for those who do believe, you cannot give them, or leave them, wonders enough. If I had to make a religion for philosophers, it should be just the reverse." In this tone the conversation went on for some time, and Bonaparte professed so much scepticism as to question whether Jesus Christ had ever existed. This is very common every-day scepticism; so that in his free-thinking I saw nothing to admire, but the openness with which he exposed it.'

Bonaparte sent shortly afterwards to Wieland a brevet of admission into his Legion of Honour; and the Emperor Alexander of Russia transmitted to him nearly at the same time the order of Saint Anne: so entirely did he also admire and wish to conciliate talents so independently and impartially exerted.

Wieland continued his habits of literary industry

even in the midst of bustle and of danger. To his *Aristippus* succeeded *Menander and Glycerion,* and *Krates and Hipparchia,* two Greek novels of high merit; the *Hexameron of Rosenhain,* a compilation of earlier unacknowledged stories; and *Euthanasia,* a sort of valedictory dissertation on human life, and against the belief of ghosts, which seems to imply a final relinquishment of those opinions concerning futurity that were attached to his *Liberty of Reasoning in Matters of Belief.*

In the autumn of 1809, Wieland was afflicted with a severe and dangerous illness; from which he recovered, but which left a tendency to ophthalmia truly hostile to his habits of literary industry. From the account in one of his letters, the attack seems to have been paralytic; and he describes with feeling gratitude the kind attentions of his children and grand-children, while he was learning again, as he expresses it, the use of his arms and legs, like a child.

Wine was recommended to him, and Port in preference; and the Duke, he adds, has opened to me the fountain of Hygeia in the court-cellar. He complained henceforth of some diminution of his memory, but was able to undertake a translation of *Cicero's Letters,* to which he attached excellent illustrative notes. At this late period of his life, he first became a member of the club of Free-masons, probably because it afforded frequent, neighbourly, and unrestrained society: he was admitted into the Amalia lodge of Weimar, 4th of April, 1809. The brethren made a festival of his eightieth birth-day in 1812, and had a medal struck in honor of him.

The estate at Osmanstadt having been ultimately acquired by the Brentano family at Frankfort, to which

Wieland had been amicably attached, it was arranged that the original project of there placing his remains and his monument should still be realized. The statuary of the court of Weimar, Weisser, undertook the appropriate decorations. On the side which records the death of Anna Dorothea Wieland, born Hillenbrand, were sculptured in the marble two intwined hands, the emblem of conjugal affection; and, on the side which was destined to record Wieland's age, were sculptured a winged lyre and a star of immortality above. Wieland himself wrote for the monument a simple distich, which may thus be rendered:

> Love and Friendship united their kindred souls in life;
> And this common stone covers their mortal remains.

Having now calmly superintended every preparation for death, he would jokingly say that he ought not to be kept waiting any longer. In January, 1813, however, he was still well enough to attend the theatre, and to enjoy the comic acting of Iffland: but on the 13th day of that month a second paralytic stroke assailed him, which on the 20th put an end to his existence. Conscious of the approach of death, he successively took leave of his descendants, who alternately watched in his bed-room: when he thought that his end was very near, he began to repeat his own translation of Hamlet's soliloquy; and it was at the second exclamation, "*to die*,"—"*to sleep*," that his soul took flight, to resolve the doubt.

The impression made by the news of this event was deeply felt throughout Weimar. The lodge of Freemasons applied to the family for leave to order the funeral at their expense: it was granted; and they resolved to attend as a body in their robes of ceremony. The

corpse lay for several days exposed in state, on cushions of blue silk, in a rich coffin decorated with gilding: a white shroud was wrapped round the limbs; and the head alone was visible, retaining the black velvet *calotte*, round which was braided a wreath of laurel. A copy of *Oberon*, and one of *Musarion*, were placed under it, as the worthiest pillows; the imperial orders of Saint Anne, and the Legion of Honor, lay beside him, on a cushion of white satin. On the 25th of January, the Amalia Lodge was appointed to assemble at the Castle in Osmanstadt, to accompany the funeral procession; the body having been conveyed thither during the night from Weimar. Deputies from the city attended, and the corpse had sixteen bearers, brother-masons. Wieland's eldest son walked as chief mourner, with the French resident Baron St. Aignan, who had requested a station in the ceremony. It was a cold but clear day, and the procession passed without accident along the alley of lime-trees to the grove in the garden, through a vast crowd of silent and sorrowing spectators. Sacred music composed by Stockmann, and an appropriate anthem, accompanied the whole march; and M. Günther pronounced the usual orations during the interment.

'Years hence, and centuries hence,' concludes M. Gruber,[5] 'our children and their children will walk in pilgrimage to this grave, and relate to one another, that, during a long life, Wieland strove unwearied after truth, exercised goodness, and delineated beauty; and how sincerely zealous he was for the glory of German literature, which he peculiarly brought into honor among foreigners. If the proper fountain of poetry

[5] The foregoing biography of Wieland is principally abridged from J. G. Gruber's *C. M. Wieland geschildert:* 2 vol. Leipzig, 1815 and 1816.

flowed less abundantly in him than in some others, yet he has diverted the fairest tributary streams of Greece, Rome, England, Italy, and France, into the channel, whence to us he has fed so wide a lake of glittering waters. He singly may be said to have renewed among us Lucian and Horace, Xenophon and Shaftesbury, Ariosto and Cervantes, Voltaire and Chaulieu, Sterne and Metastasio. He has furnished models of didactic poetry such as no other nation can exhibit; he introduced the romantic epopæa, and has hitherto been equalled by no imitator. He gave us our first philosophic romances; and, notwithstanding the changes of fashion to which that class of literature is peculiarly exposed, several of them retain a permanent classical rank. He founded our vernacular opera: his writings have peculiarly improved the language of polished conversation; he enabled German to supersede French, and led the Graces into gothic halls: his philosophy is cheerful, his irony gentle, his indulgence liberal, and his perseverance in struggling against error, darkness, and oppression, truly praiseworthy. The fear of man was no more known to him than the fear of death; nor can he be said to have had the fear of God: it was rather a filial love toward the Father of all, that dwelt within him. To reason about the interests of mankind impartially, and to bring to bear the inferences of that reason, formed the cordial purpose and eager business of his philanthropic life. Hallowed be thy memory, thou charming singer, thou sound philosopher, thou meritorious German, thou noble man!'

§ 9.

Reviewal of Wieland's Collective Works, vol. I—X.—*Agathon —The modern Amadis—The golden Mirror—Religion of Psammis—Danishmend—Musarion—Didactic Poems—Sixtus and Clara—the Graces—Comic Tales.*

Of that higher class of writers, whose popularity, incompressible within the scanty limits of one country, language, or age, is likely to assert a diffusive and permanent influence over the opinions of a refined portion of the whole European public, Christopher Martin Wieland of Biberach is one of the most remarkable and voluminous. Second only to Voltaire in the copiousness and variety of his effusions, he is admirable as a composer both in verse and prose. He has excelled in epic and didactic poetry, and has appeared in the dramatic arena without disgrace. His varied disquisitions are admired for elegant erudition and philosophic penetration; his dialogues, for poetry of form and urbanity of manner; his novels, for the insight which they display and communicate into the most hidden recesses of the human heart. Few writers have so uniformly walked within the precincts of the beautiful. He never swells into bombast, he seldom mounts to sublimity, and, if he sometimes tires by the gay profusion of his repeated descriptions, he never sinks into a vulgar insipidity. Scenes of pathos he avoids, either as unattainable by his powers, or as

painful to his equanimity. Like the painter Albani, he delights to detain the imagination beneath groves gay with a thousand flowers, peopled with happy lovers sacrificing to Cupid, or haunted by choirs of nymphs, whose thin drapery is the sport of the zephyrs, and whose charms are the pursuit of fauns or the prize of river-gods. His obtrusive wit, rather dexterous than forcible, might gratify the delicacy of a Chesterfield: it aims at exciting a continual smile, but it neither apes the bitter grin of Voltaire, nor provokes, like the humor of Swift, to open-mouthed laughter.

Possessed of the whole mass of ancient and modern literature, Wieland has distilled from it the favourite ornaments of his compositions, which are throughout more remarkable for selection than invention. He even delights in assisting the reader to trace his eternal allusions to their source; in pointing out the narrator whose fable he embellishes, the stylist whose epithet he transplants, or the philosopher whose inference he impresses. Allusions to the classical pages of any period are always gratifying; for the reputation of distinguished writers being in this case associated with their expressions, the inherent effect of these is thus strengthened:—but allusions to secondary authors, known only from circumstances, appear pedantic as soon as their notoriety expires; and very many such occur amid the inlaid phrases of Wieland. He has been charged with inculcating religious opinions verging on a hopeless epicurism, and is justly reprehensible for the too frequent introduction of scenery licentiously voluptuous. To borrow the words of a foreign critic: " On retrouve chez lui les idées grivoises de Crebillon et les plaisanteries de Hamilton. Il vous sait encadrer dans sa mosaique les plus beaux vers de Co-

lardeau, de Pezay, de Dorat, et il se donne par fois un air de sagesse qui grouppe à merveille avec ces images libertines. On l'appelle le Petrone du Nord, mais il a bien plus de gout et de finesse. On cache son livre aux demoiselles, qui ont grand soin de le savoir par coeur."

Among the writers who have most sensibly contributed to tinge the mind of Wieland with its peculiar hues, and of whose perusal the most frequent traces occur in his compositions, may be numbered Lucian, whom he has translated in a manner only to be compared with that of Belin de la Ballue;—Horace, whose epistle to the Pisos he has rendered with not less felicity than Mr. Colman;—and the younger Crebillon, the delicacy of whose pencil is no apology for its extreme lasciviousness.

Three quarters of a century have now elapsed since Wieland first entered the lists of authorship; his career began with the dawn, and has perhaps extended to the sunset of German literature. He had (as he himself expresses it,) the heart-exalting satisfaction of being the cotemporary of all the German poets and writers, in whose works breathes the genius of immortality, and the rival of none: most of them were his friends, not one of them was his foe.

The ten volumes before us form the first lot of one of the four new and only complete editions of the works of Wieland, of which the republication began in 1795, with profuse alterations, under the author's inspection. I shall give some account of each of his principal productions in the order in which they are here arranged. *Agathon* occupies the first three volumes. This novel has for many years been known in England (since 1773) by a good translation from one of the early editions,

executed by Mr. Richardson, of Eworth, in Yorkshire. Some omissions and many extensive changes have since been made, and three new chapters have been inserted between the penultimate and concluding section. It may seem needless, at this time, to state that it contains the history of nearly twenty years of the life of a young Greek, supposed to flourish about the hundredth olympiad; who, having been educated, like the Ion of Euripides, in religious purity, and having imbibed the sublime speculations of the Orphic theosophy, is suddenly thrown on the world, and exposed to its temptations. His innocence, assailed at once by the philosophy of Hippias, and the attractions of Danae, is overpowered; and the fine enthusiast sinks for a while into the contented voluptuary. At length he breaks loose; is engaged in active life at Athens, and at the court of Syracuse, where he philosophizes with Aristippus and Plato; and, having corrected by experience his notions of mankind, he at last fixes at Tarentum, where the conversations and example of the excellent Archytas restore to unison his speculation and his practice, and complete the fashion of his virtue.

This history, which, when denuded of its trappings, is that of a considerable number of men, displays a deep knowledge of the human heart, and of the causes and means by which one growth of character and opinion comes gradually to succeed another. Neither has any part of the relation been laboured so attentively by the author as the full display of Agathon's mind, as the analysis of its several psychological phænomena, as the studious demonstration that thus, and no otherwise, could such a person be actuated by the circumstances supposed,—in short, as the solution of every moral difficulty. In this consist the characteristic ex-

cellence and peculiar perfection of the work: so that it offers a gratification analogous to studying a character of Shakspeare anatomized by Richardson. It also displays an intimacy with Greek manners and Greek philosophy, which has only been rivalled in the long subsequent travels of Anacharsis. The mode of narration, pleasing as it is, would be more agreeable, if all direct allusions to modern personages and writings were expunged; and if the imagination were never recalled from among the classical personages of the story, by the incongruous mention (p. 246) of Molly Seagrim, by the allusion (p. 264) to Rousseau, by the quotation (p. 306) from Montesquieu, &c. If the author scrupled to borrow a thought without indicating its source, he might at least have reserved the acknowledgement for a note.

The summary of opinions which Agathon is represented as bringing home from his travels, and which may undoubtedly be considered as the personal sentiments of a writer whose long life has been passed in a skilful observation of mankind, have in this edition been retouched, and merit translation.

"He departed with few prejudices, and returned without those few. During his philosophic pilgrimage, he remained a mere spectator of the stage of things, and was the more at leisure to judge of the performance.

"His observations on others completed what his own reflexions and experience had begun. They convinced him that men in the average *are* what Hippias paints them, although they *should* be what Archytas exhibits.

"He saw every where—what may yet be seen—that they are not so good as they might be if they were wiser: but he also saw that they cannot become bet-

ter *until* they are wiser; and they cannot become wiser unless fathers, mothers, nurses, teachers, and priests, with their other overlookers, from the constable to the king, shall have become as wise as it belongs to each in his relative situation to be, in order to do his duty, and to be truly useful to the human race.

" He saw, therefore, that *information* favourable to moral improvement is the only ground on which the hope of better times, that is of better men, can rationally be founded. He saw that all nations, the wildest barbarian as well as the most refined Greek, *honour* virtue; and that no society, not even a horde of Arabian robbers, can subsist without some degree of virtue. He found every town, every province, every nation, so much happier, the better the morals of the inhabitants were; and, without exception, he saw most corruption amid extreme poverty or extreme wealth.

" He found, among all the nations whom he visited, religion muffled up in superstition, abused to the injury of society, and converted by hypocrisy, or open force, into an instrument of deception, ambition, avarice, voluptuousness, or laziness. He saw that individuals and whole nations can have religion without virtue, and that thereby they are made worse: but he also saw that individuals and whole nations, if already virtuous, are made better by piety.

" He saw legislation, administration, and police, every where full of defects and abuses: but he also saw that men without laws, administration, or police, were worse and more unhappy. Every where he heard abuses censured, and found every one desirous that the world should be mended; he saw many willing to toil at its improvement, and inexhaustible in their projects —but not one who was willing to begin the amend-

ment *on himself.* Hence he easily conceived why nothing grows better.

"He saw men every where influenced by two opposite instincts, the desire of *equality* and the desire of *domineering* without restraint over others: which convinced him that, unless this evil can be subdued, much may not be expected from changes in governments;[6] that man must revolve in an eternal circle from royal despotism and aristocratic insolence, to popular licentiousness and mob-tyranny; and from *these* back to *those,* unless a legislation, deduced from the first principles of justice, religion, and morality, and an education corresponding with them, shall in most men curb the animal desire of domineering without restraint.

"He saw that every where arts, industry, and economy, are followed by riches, riches by luxury, luxury by corrupt manners, and corrupt manners by the dissolution of the state:—but he also saw that the arts, under the guidance of wisdom, embellish, evolve, and ennoble mankind; that art is the half of our nature, and that man without art is the most miserable of animals.

"He saw throughout the whole economy of society, the limits of the true and false, of the good and bad, of the right and wrong, imperceptibly melting into each other; and he thereby convinced himself still more of the necessity of wise laws, and of the duty of a good citizen rather to trust the law than his own preconceptions.

"All that he had seen confirmed him in the opinion that man—in one respect allied to the beasts of the

6 Here the author does not express himself with precision. The love of domineering and the impatience of control are the two contending instincts. The desire of equality is the equitable compromise between them, is the just mean, is the virtue which inclines to neither vice.

field, in another to superior beings, and even to the Deity himself—is no less incapable of being a mere beast than a mere spirit: that he only lives conformably to his nature, when he is ever ascending: that each higher step toward wisdom and virtue increases his happiness: that wisdom and virtue have at all times been the true gauge of public and private happiness among men; and that this experienced truth, which no sceptic can weaken, is sufficient to blow away all the sophistries of a Hippias, and irreversibly to confirm Archytas's theory of living wisely."

Thus terminates the third volume. The fourth introduces the reader to a species of epic poetry, of which it is difficult to give either a definition or an example. *The Modern Amadis* is one of those freaks of fancy, inspired by a wanton laughter-loving muse, which is at once a singular and not unamusing specimen of heroi-comic narrative. The personages are knights errant, princesses, Saracens; and the machinery, wizards, fairies, monsters; such as occur in the songs of Ariosto or rather of Fortiguerra.[7] The manners, however, are not those of the age of chivalry, but those of the court of Paris in its most luxurious period, while it was the pink of etiquette, the cornucopia of compliment, and the bower of gallantry. The ludicrous effect of this whimsical combination may be imagined, when it is added that the incidents are varied with felicity, and are such as Lafontaine would not disdain to describe. They are told, however, more in the manner of Prior's tales, with his ease, his grace, his parenthesis, his profusion of learned display, witty allusion, and Horatian morality. The poem consists of eighteen cantoes, which are broken into stanzas of ten lines each, and the verses

[7] An Italian poet, author of "Il Ricciardetto," a burlesque epic.

are sometimes iambic and sometimes anapæstic: a practice introduced by Wieland into the poetry of his country, and now become highly agreeable to the German ear. The profuse notes which accompany this poem furnish a poignant literary desert. *Cupid Accused,* an entertaining mythological allegory, in five books, (written also much in Prior's manner,) completes the fifth volume.

Wieland is distinguished for ductility of imagination. His fancy, endowed with intuitive ubiquity, is alike at home in every place and every age, and knows how to invest the costume, and to think within the range of idea appropriate to its peculiar situation. Like the dervis-friend of Fadlallah, he seems able to shoot his soul into the body of man or woman, libertine or sage, of ancient or modern, of Persian, Greek, or Goth; and, by a voluntary metempsychosis, to animate each with characteristic expression. Yet still it is *his* soul which pierces through every disguise; it is with him the effect of art and skill to substitute himself for another; an observing eye discovers that the alteration is assumed. It is by means of his varied knowledge of every thing relating to the manners, superstitions, and history of different nations, that he contrives to personate all with so classical a propriety. It is Larive in Orestes, Larive in Orosman, always accurate, always admirable,—but still Larive. His characters are less the creation of a plastic genius, than the mouldings of an accomplished artist: he does not animate his figures, like Prometheus, by putting fire within, but, like Pygmalion, by external touches of the chisel. Nor are his personages so varied as at first sight they appear. He imitates general, not individual, nature: with him every character is a species; and it is with a very lim-

ited number of these, that he has undertaken the variegated list of his dramatizations. Like the manager of a band of players, his Archytas of to-day is the Danishmend of to-morrow: Hippias appears again in the Calender, and even in Jupiter; and Danae recurs with prostituted frequency in Devedassi, in Dioklea, and elsewhere.

The Golden Mirror occupies the sixth and seventh volumes of the collection. The scene of this novel lies in the harem of a Persian sultan, Shah-Gebal, whose vizir is required to amuse his tedious leisure by reading aloud the history of Sheshian. This suppositious chronicle forms a kind of philosophy of history, a generalized view of national event, an abstract or selection of those features which are common to the progress of all countries, but which are here predicated of one. It gives an account of the manner in which a people is likely to pass from savagism to civilization, and from refinement back to corruption and barbarism; from ignorance to superstition, and from superstition back to unbelief. Morals, frugality, religion, law, are described as the *cohesive*—libertinism, profusion, infidelity, licentiousness, as the *dissolving*—principles of society; and as succeeding each other with an habitual and possibly an irresistible alternation. The lecture is frequently interrupted by the conversations of the sultan, of the sultaness Nurmahal, and of the other hearers, and by many amusive court-incidents. A vein of severe satire, insinuated with oblique caution and dexterous urbanity, animates the narrative. Shah-Gebal is the idea of a prince *as he is likely to be*, and is a masterly though not wholly original personification of the despotic character: for which, and indeed for the whole form of the novel, the younger Crebillon has

been consulted. Tifan is the prince *as he should be.*

In order the more neatly to detach from the fourth chapter the beautiful episode describing the Religion of Psammis, an introductory paragraph or two have been substituted to the exact words of the original.

THE RELIGION OF PSAMMIS.

An Arabian emir, who was travelling to Damascus by way of Palmyra, found himself at a loss for the proper road. An arid desert surrounded him on every side. Drifted sands had obliterated all traces of the usual course. His attendants were alike embarrassed. No village, no caravanserai was to be seen. The camels were left to choose their own path, provided it had a north-westerly bearing.

At evening a sort of encampment was made beneath a clump of palm-trees. To pass one night in this comfortless manner had in some degree been provided against. But before the next noon the stock of water was exhausted, and to the inconvenience of heat and fatigue was superadded that of thirst. The emir's opium too was consumed, and he felt all the weariness of fatigue without the hope of refreshment.

His sufferings had attained a character of disease and agony, when at length one of those oases was discovered, which promise water, fruits, verdure, and population. It was evening before the travellers could attain this welcome spot.

No sooner were their wants known, that a venerable old man came to offer his dwelling to the emir. It was gratefully accepted. The tasteful simplicity of the apartments pleased. Wine was offered with the repast, which in some degree revived the drooping

guest, and he was carried to his sleeping-room with tenderness, but without alarm, by the beautiful grandchildren of his host.

On his awaking he opened a window commanding a prospect of the gardens, stretching round the eastern side of the house. A pure air, freshened with a thousand vivifying odors, soon dispelled the gloomy mist which hung about his brow. He felt himself strengthened. This feeling kindled a new spark of hope in his bosom, and with hope returns the love of life. While he was contemplating these gardens, and, in spite of his habitual bad taste for the splendid and the artificial, could not avoid thinking them beautiful with all their useful simplicity and apparent wildness, he perceived the old man, who, half buried in shrubs, was employing himself in little garden-labors, of which the emir had never deigned to acquire an idea. The desire of having explained whatever he saw that was strange and astonishing, in this house, induced him to walk down in order to talk with his aged host. After having thanked him for his kind reception, he began to express some wonder that a person of his years should be so upright, so active, so cheerful, and so capable of taking a share in the pleasures of life. "If thy silver hair and thine ice-gray beard did not point to extreme age," added he, "I should have taken thee for a man of forty. I beg thee to explain to me this enigma; what secret dost thou possess which can work such miracles?"

"I can give thee my secret in three words," replied the old man smiling: "Toil, pleasure, and repose, all in a moderate degree, in equal portions, and intermingled at the suggestion of nature, work this miracle, as thou callest it, in the simplest manner imaginable. A

weariness not unpleasant is the hint which nature gives us to interrupt our labor by amusement: and a like suggestion warns us to rest from both. Toil keeps alive our taste for the pleasures of nature, and our ability to enjoy them; and only he, who for her pure and blameless delights has lost all relish, is condemned to seek in artificial gratifications a satisfaction which they cannot bestow. Learn of me, stranger, how happy we are made by obedience to Nature. She rewards us for it with the enjoyment of her best gifts. My whole life has been a long and almost unbroken series of agreeable moments; for a labor within reach of our strength, and accompanied by no embittering circumstance, is attended with a sort of gentle delight, of which the beneficial influence overspreads our whole frame: but, in order to be happy, through Nature's means, the greatest of her benefits and the instrument of all the rest, the sensibility, must be preserved incorrupt. In order rightly to feel, it is needful rightly to think."

The old man saw by the looks of his guest that he was scarsely understood. "Thou wilt comprehend me better," continued he, "if I tell thee the history of our little colony: for in every other dwelling, to which chance might have led thee among these valleys, thou wouldst have found all things nearly as with me." The emir expressed his willingness to listen: but, as he seemed to have a kind of wearied appearance, the humane old man proposed to him to sit down on a sofa, which stood in a summer-house or garden-hall, surrounded by lemon-trees; although he would himself have preferred a walk beneath the palms.

The emir willingly accepted this offer; and, while a lovely young slave was serving them with the best

Moka coffee, the cheerful ancient thus began his narration:

"Tradition informs us that our forefathers were of Greek extraction, and by an accident, the particulars of which are uninteresting, were driven some centuries ago to take shelter among these mountains. They colonized these agreeable valleys, which Nature seems to have fashioned for the very purpose of concealing a small number of happy beings from the envy, and the contagious manners, of the rest of mortals. Here they dwelled contentedly, circumscribed within the narrow circle of natural wants, and in appearance so scantily provided, that the contiguous Beduins scarsely appeared to notice their existence. Time by degrees extinguished the traces of their origin: their language melted into the Arabic; their religion degenerated into a number of superstitious observances, of which they could give no rational account; and of the arts (to have excelled in which has given to the Greek nations an imprescriptible rank above all others) they retained only the love of music, and a certain innate inclination for the beautiful, and for social gratifications, which furnished the wise lawgiver of their posterity with the ground-work, on which he has known how to erect a little state of happy men. Anxious to eternize among themselves beauty of form, they made it a rule to admit into their colony only the loveliest of the daughters of Yemen; and this custom, which our lawgiver thought worthy of being consecrated into an inviolable duty, is no doubt the cause, why, in all our valleys, thou wilt not have seen any one of this or of the other sex, who would not pass, out of our district, for a remarkably handsome person.

"In my grandfather's time, the excellent man, to

whom we are indebted for our present constitution, the second and true founder of our nation, came by a chain of accidents into this region. We know nothing of his origin, nor of the events of his life prior to the time of his coming among us. He then appeared to be fifty years old, was tall, of a majestic figure, and of so attractive a behaviour, that in a short time he won every heart. He had brought with him as much gold as proved that he had no other motive for living with us than because he felt happy in our society. The mildness and pleasantry of his manners, the unaffected wisdom of his discourses, the knowledge which he had of a thousand useful and agreeable things, united with an eloquence which stole irresistibly into the soul, gave him by degrees a more unlimited authority among us than a monarch is wont to have over those who are born his subjects. He found our little nation capable of being happy; 'and men, (said he to himself,) who for centuries have been contented without superfluities, deserve to be so. I will make them happy.' He concealed his project for a long time; because he justly thought that he must make the first impression by his example. He settled therefore among us, lived at home as thou hast seen us live, and brought us acquainted with a number of conveniences and amusements which could not but excite desire. Scarsely had he gained this step, when he set about his great plan. A friend, who had accompanied him, and who was skilled in a high degree in all the fine arts, assisted in accelerating the execution. Many of our young men, after having obtained from the two friends the necessary preparation, laboured under their direction with astonishing enthusiasm. Wild tracts were cultivated. Artificial meadows and gardens, blooming with fruitful trees,

supplanted arid deserts of thistle and heath. Rocks were shaded with newly-planted vines. In the middle of a small elevation, which overlooks the most beautiful of our valleys, ascended a round temple open on all sides, which was encircled at some distance by a grove of myrtle, covering the whole hill. Within the columns of the temple nothing was to be seen but an estrade, a few steps higher than the floor; and on this were placed three statues of white marble, which could not be contemplated without emotions of love and delight. This last work was a riddle to our whole people, and Psammis (such was the name of the extraordinary stranger) delayed giving them an explanation of it, until he perceived that the affectionate but reverential awe which they had conceived for him was no longer able to repress their inquisitive curiosity.

"At length, on the morning of a fine day, which has since been the holiest of our festivals, he conducted a number of our people, whom he had selected as the most adapted for his purpose, to the summit of the hill; and, having seated himself among them, beside the myrtles, he gave them to understand that he had come to them with no other view than to make them and their posterity happy; that he expected no other reward than the pleasure of attaining his end; and that he required no other condition from them than a vow to preserve inviolate the laws which he was about to give them. It would take too long a time to relate what he said to convince his hearers, and what he did to accomplish his enterprize, and to give it all the stability which a project founded on nature may derive from wise institution. A sample of his morality, which forms the first part of his legislation, will be sufficient to give thee some idea of his scope.

"Each of us receives, at entering on his fourteenth year, when he takes a vow in the temple of the *Kharitai*, to live agreeably to nature, some tablets of ebony on which this morality is written in golden letters. We always carry them about us, and consider them as holy things, as a talisman with which our happiness is associated. Whoever should undertake to introduce other principles would be considered as the corrupter of our morals, as the enemy of our welfare, and would be banished from our precincts. Hear, if thou art inclined, a fragment which I will read from these tablets.

"'The Being of Beings, (thus Psammis begins the introduction to his laws,) who is invisible to our eyes, incomprehensible to our understandings, and who has made us acquainted with his existence only by his benefits, hath no need of us; and requireth no other acknowledgement from us, than that we suffer ourselves to be made happy.

"'Nature, however, whom he hath appointed to be the universal foster-mother, inspires with our first sensations those instincts, on the temper and concord of which our happiness depends. Her voice now addresses you through the lips of Psammis; his laws are no other than her laws.

"'She wills that you rejoice in your existence. Joy is the ultimate wish of every feeling being; it is to man what sunshine is to the plant. By a smile is announced the first evolution of humanity in the suckling, by its absence the approach of the dissolution of our being. Reciprocal love and benevolence are the purest springs of joy; innocence of heart and manners are the purest channels through which they flow.

"'These beneficent emanations of the divinity are what you have seen represented by the images, to

which your common temple has been consecrated. Consider them as emblems of love, of innocence, and of joy. As often as the spring returns, as often as the harvest has been ended, and on every other holiday, assemble in the myrtle-grove—strow the temple with roses—and crown these graceful statues with wreaths of fresh flowers:—renew before them the inviolable law to live faithful to nature—embrace each other amid these vows—and let the young conclude the festival under the delighted eyes of the old with dances and with songs. Let the shepherdess, when her heart begins to awake from the long dream of childhood, steal alone into the myrtle-grove, and offer to love the first sighs which heave her swelling bosom. Let the mother with the smiling babe in her arms often wander hither, and lull him by her songs into sweet slumber at the feet of the benevolent goddesses.

"'Hear me, ye children of nature: by this and by no other name shall your people henceforth be called.

"'Nature has framed all your senses, has framed every fibre of the wondrous web of your being, has framed your brain and your heart for instruments of pleasure. Could she more audibly declare for what purpose she created you?

"'Had it been possible to fashion you capable only of pleasure, and incapable of pain, it would have been done. As far as was possible, she has shut every avenue to pain. As long as ye follow her dictates, it will seldom interrupt your enjoyments: when it intervenes, it will sharpen your sensibility to every fresh pleasure, and thus become a benefit. It will be to life as the shadows fleeting over a sunshiny landscape, as the dissonances in a symphony, as the salt in your food.

"'All good resolves itself into pleasure; all evil into

pain: but the highest pain is the consciousness of having made one's self unhappy, (here the emir fetched a deep sigh,) and the highest pleasure is a calm retrospect over a well-spent, remorseless life.

"'Never, children of nature, never be born among you the monster, who finds a joy in seeing others suffer, or who is unable to rejoice in their felicity! So unnatural an abortion cannot originate, where innocence and love unite to shed the spirit of delight on all that breathes. Rejoice, my children, in your existence, in your humanity. Enjoy as much as possible every moment of your lives; but never forget that, without moderation, even the most natural desires become a source of pain; that, by excess, the purest pleasures become poisons, which wear out the capability of future gratification. Temperance and voluntary abstinence are the surest preservatives against inanition and exhaustion. Moderation is wisdom, and to the wise alone it is granted to empty unto the last drop the full cup of unmingled bliss, which nature offers to every mortal. The sage often declines a present pleasure; not because he is a foe to joy, not because he weakly trembles at some imaginary dæmon who is angry when man is glad, but in order by his continence to lay by for the future a larger hoard of more perfect enjoyment.

"'Hear, O ye children of nature, hear her unalterable law. Without labor there is no health either of soul or body; without health, no happiness. Nature has therefore refused to you the means of preserving and sweetening existence, unless you win them from her bosom by moderate toil. Nothing but labor proportioned to your strength will obtain for you the essential condition of all enjoyment, health.

"'A sick or a sickly man is in every respect an unfortunate creature. All the energies of his being suffer from it; their natural proportion and counterpoise are disturbed, their vigor is enfeebled, their bent is altered. His senses convey to him false impressions of objects; the light of his understanding is obscured; and his judgement of the value of things bears to that of a sound man the same relation, as the sallow glimmer of a dying sepulchral lamp to the radiance of the sun.

"'From the instant at which—and O that from that time the day were to you extinct!—from the instant at which intemperance or artificial gratifications shall have sown in your veins the seeds of lurking and painful diseases, will the laws of Psammis have lost their power to render you happy. Then, wretches, cast them into the flames: then will the goddesses of pleasure be changed for you into furies: then return hastily into a world, in which uncorrected ye may wish your existence at an end, and in which ye will at least enjoy the sad comfort of beholding on all sides partners of your misery!

"'Never pursue, my children, a higher degree of knowledge than I have vouchsafed you. Ye know enough when ye have learned to be happy.

"'Accustom your eyes to the beautiful in nature; and from her variously fair forms, her rich combinations, her charming colouring, store your fancy with ideas of beauty. Take pains, on all the works of your hands and of your intellect, to impress the seal of nature, simplicity, and ornament unstrained. Let every thing that surrounds you in your dwellings, recall to you her beauties, remind you that you are her children.

"'All the other works of nature appear but as the sports and exercises by which she was preparing herself for the formation of her master-piece, man. In him alone she seems to have united every excellence possible on this side of heaven. On him alone she seems to have laboured with the love and glow of an enkindled artist. Yet has she calmly left it in our power to finish or to mar the sketch. Why did she so? I know not. From what she has done, however, we must infer what we are to do. Every harmonious movement of our bodies, every soft sensation of joy, of love, of tender sympathy, embellishes. Every irregular or over-violent movement, every impetuous passion, every envious and malevolent emotion, distorts our features, envenoms our looks, and degrades the lovely form of man to a visible resemblance with that of some disagreeable brute. As long as goodness of heart and cheerfulness of soul shall inspire your actions, ye will remain the fairest of mankind.

"'Next to the eye, the ear is the most perfect of senses. Accustom it to artless expressive melodies, which breathe the finer feelings, which thrill the heart with sweet vibrations, or lull the slumbering soul into soft dreams. Joy, love, innocence, attune man to harmony with himself, with all good men, and with all nature. As long as they dwell within, the habitual tone of your voice, all your language, will be music.

"'Psammis has unfolded to you new sources of agreeable sensations: through his means, the repose is voluptuous which you enjoy when wearied with your daily labor: through his means, agreeable fruits, transplanted into this foreign soil, delight your palate: through his means, wine inspires you to higher hilarity, to open-hearted converse, and to sportive wit,

without which its best relish is wanting to the social feast. In love, which ye knew but in the low shape of a natural want, he taught you to find the soul of life, the source of the fairest enthusiasm, and of the purest voluptuousness of the heart.

"'O my children, what pleasure, what agreeable sensation, could I wish to withhold from you? Not any one, certainly not any one—that nature intended for you: in this, unlike those who would annihilate the *man,* in order—vain and ridiculous attempt!—to evolve a *god* from his ruins. I recommend to you moderation; but for no other reason than because it is indispensable toward defending you from pain, and preserving you capable of enjoyment. Not, out of indulgence toward the frailness of nature, I *allow*—no, out of obedience to her laws, I *command* you to gratify your senses. I abolish the deceptious distinction between the useful and agreeable. Know that nothing deserves the name of a pleasure which is to be purchased with the suffering of another, or with posterior repentance; and that the useful is only useful because it preserves from disappointment, or is a fountain of satisfaction. I abolish the absurd opposition between different kinds of pleasure, and establish an eternal compatibility between them, by revealing to you the natural share which the heart takes in every sensual, and the senses in every internal pleasure. I have multiplied, refined, ennobled, your joys—what can I do more?

"'One thing, and the most important of all!

"'Learn, my children, the easy art of extending your happiness into infinity, the sole secret for approaching as nearly as may be to the felicity of the gods, and, if so bold a thought may be allowed, for imitating the bliss of the author of nature.

"'Extend your benevolence over all nature—love whatever partakes with you of her most universal gift, existence.

"'Love every one in whom ye behold the honoured traces of humanity, even where they seem in ruin.

"'Rejoice with all who rejoice: wipe the tears of remorse from the cheeks of punished folly; and kiss from the eyes of innocence the tears of sympathy.

"'Multiply your existence by accustoming yourselves to love, in every man, the image of your common nature; and, in every good man, another self.

"'Taste, as often as ye can, the godlike pleasure of rendering others happier;—and thou unfortunate, whose bosom heaves not with fellow-feeling at the mere thought of this, fly, fly for ever from the dwellings of the children of nature!'

"The rest of our legislation," continued the old man, "is equally mild and simple. Our little community, which consists of about five hundred families, subsists in perfect equality. We need no other distinctions than those which nature makes between man and man. A love of our constitution, and a reverence for the aged, whom we consider as its natural guardians, suffice to preserve among us order and tranquility. We consider ourselves as a single family, whose little differences need only a friendly arbitration.

"Our lawgiver, conceiving that, in order to preserve such institutions, it would be necessary we should always remain an inconsiderable tribe, has ordered a periodical examination of our young people. Those of unusual abilities, those who are infected with the love of fame, even those who have a mere curiosity to see the world, are advised to seek employment and fortune in some city of Egypt, Syria, or Persia. We

thus, every five years, part with our superfluous population; and when it happens, as is often the case, that in old age some of our emigrants wish to return, a jury sits in judgement on their conduct and disposition, before we permit them to settle among us."

The emir was projecting to ask many questions, and to visit in company with the old man the whole of this lovely and delightful district; when his attendants, who, according to previous instructions, had got every thing in readiness for departure, came to summons him for the journey. He was too much accustomed to be moved about by others, to persist in a tour of mere curiosity; and having presented a roll of muslin to his hostess, he proceeded on his way toward Palmyra.

The history of *Danishmend* is exactly comprehended in the eighth volume. It narrates the conduct of this excellent vizir during his disgrace with Shah-Gebal; and it represents him as choosing his residence under a fictitious name among the simple mountaineers of a remotely eastern province, and as endearing himself to their gratitude by his wisdom and his example. During his sojournment, some Hindoo priests, or calenders, and Devedassi, a dancing girl, introduce themselves among the innocent tribe. The vices and corruptions of a factitious civilization now break in. The worth of Danishmend becomes odious; and he is expelled by the corrupted people. At length they discover their error; and, after having tasted of the tree of the knowledge of evil, they agree to revert to their pristine rectitude. They send an embassy to Danishmend; who, in the meantime, has been reconciled with Shah-Gebal, and he returns to them as governor of the

province. The flower-gardens of luxuriant description, which adorn this novel, hardly conceal the tameness of the incidents. Jets d'eaux of liberalism dot occasionally the parterre; but these spurts of philosophy neither rise high nor voluminously, and seem to imitate the timid irresolution of the Austrian cabinet, which they were erected to gratify.

Musarion is a didactic poem of three books, in an epic form. Fanias, an Athenian spendthrift, is come to reside on a small farm by the sea-shore, the only remnant of his patrimony. He begins to persuade himself that he despises the splendid pleasures which he is no longer able to purchase, and that he sincerely is *the Stoic* which he professes to be. His guests are Theophron *a Platonist*, and Cleanthes *a Cynic*; two disputatious philosophers, who at length fairly attempt to decide, by weight of fist, the preference between their systems. Musarion, an accomplished courtezan whom Fanias had pursued in vain during his prosperity, arrives. The Stoic flies from her converse, and refuses to shelter her under his roof; she banters him about his system; and she quarters herself in the house. It is supper-time. A female slave of Musarion has brought an elegant dessert of conserves and delicate wines. Musarion defends the *Epicurean* system, in opposition to the three philosophers, with exquisite courtesy. By and by, the Cynic is carried drunk into the stable: the Platonist is overcome by a very sensual passion for the female slave; and the Stoic falls in love anew, and consents that the generous Musarion should embellish his farm with her residence and her fortune.

Of all the poems of Wieland this is the most exquisitely finished;—there is not a line of which the construction, the melody, the imagery, has not undergone

the severest investigation, and been retouched with an ever-sharpened chisel. It retains withal an inexpressible ease and grace. The playful and delicate wit with which the whole narrative is conducted, the accurate view which it exhibits of the spirit of Athenian philosophy, and the dexterity with which the unrestrained incidents are made to come in aid of the theoretical propositions, give to the whole an interest and an excellence not attained, perhaps, in any other didactic poem of equal compass.

Other poems, on subjects of Grecian philosophy, and a legend entitled *Sixtus and Clara*, complete the ninth volume. The tenth opens with *The Graces*, a narrative originally intended to be in rime, but with which the author was imperfectly satisfied:—he has therefore retained in verse the fragments which pleased him, and has connected them with intervals of prose. It also contains four *comic tales*, Diana and Endymion, the Judgement of Paris, Aurora and Cephalus, and Combabus, a tale, of which the fable indeed is not strictly delicate, but of which the narration is conducted with admirable skill. It is terminated by *Shah Lolo*, an eastern tale.

This edition, with respect to orthography, differs considerably from all preceding impressions. In the German, some analogies have been extended, and some silent consonants suppressed; by which means the language appears, to a foreigner, at first sight, more intelligible and less rugged than before: still the practice has been continued of expressing, by *sch*, the articulation which other European nations express by *sh*. The Roman character has been employed. In words derived from the Greek, the cappa is expressed by *k*, the phi by *f*, but not the chi by *q*: as if we wrote Faidra,

Filoktetes, Filosofy, Fantasy: a practice resembling that of the Italians. The style itself has throughout been delicately retouched. It has gained in precision, abounds more with compounds, and less with exotics; yet *realisieren* for *verwirklichen*, and some others, no doubt for good reasons, remain. It probably possesses the highest degree of elegance and polish to which the German language has attained. A spirit of innovation in dialect is however still afloat in that country: new words, provided they obey the established analogies, are continually received, and anomalies are gradually subjected to the more prevalent rules of the language: so that the beauty of still greater precision, regularity, and melody, may perhaps yet be obtainable.

§ 10.

Reviewal of Wieland's Collective Works continued, vol. XI—XVII—*Don Silvio of Rosalva—Diogenes of Sinope—Koxkox and Kikequetzel—Dissertations—Travels of Abulfauaris—Cyrus—Idris and Zenide.*

THE second decad of volumes would furnish too much matter for a single section: let us be content with the next seven. The eleventh and twelvth offer to perusal *Don Silvio of Rosalva*, a novel already known in Great Britain by an accurate translation. No important variations have been made in this history of *a Quixote of Fairyism*; who, accustomed in his early years to the exclusive study of Mother Goose's Tales, of the Thousand and One Nights, of the Persian Fables, &c. is prepared to discover in the real world personages similar to those with whose existence and celebrity he is exclusively acquainted. If he pursues a butterfly, some disguised Perie lurks, in his imagination, beneath its motley-powdered wings. If he finds a portrait, some patron Genie dropt it in his path to stimulate his search after a spell-bound princess predestined to his arms. If he is hospitably received by an old maid, the cats in her parlour are human attendants of his beloved unknown, metamorphosed by the spells of some bewitching rival. Many diverting misapprehensions occur: but, by degrees the illusions of youth give way to the realities of experience: and the disenchanted enthusiast is tempt-

ed to discover in Donna Felicia a mere mortal capable of rendering him happy, without the aid of any supernatural circumstance. This novel is in fact a lecture against superstition, in which the miracles of fairyism supply the place of those that are inculcated in the legendary writings of the several deceivers of mankind. M. Wieland, in this narrative, displays an astonishingly comprehensive familiarity with all the more fanciful tales of the fairies: but he observes in it, notwithstanding the change of personage and place, his usual march of mind. It is still the Orphic theosophy of Agathon, dispelled by the epicurism of Hippias;—it is still the Platonic Venus Urania of Peregrinus Proteus, resolving herself into a human beauty:—but it is ever a series of pleasing scenes, of rounded periods, of urbane satire, and of characters, not strongly marked perhaps, nor heroic, nor new, but strictly conformable to the nicest claims of ethic probability. The humor of this story is less recondite, and the comic features have more relievo, than in most other productions of the author.

The *Remains of Diogenes of Sinope*, which are comprized in the thirteenth volume, have formerly been translated into English under some other title, and were received with utter indifference by the public. It is one of those writings of Wieland which it requires classical learning to appretiate, and a prejudice in favor of his manner thoroughly to relish. It has been studiously altered, but not powerfully enlivened, in this new edition. The most interesting portion is the ideal republic.

The fourteenth volume opens with a Mexican story entitled *Koxkox and Kikequetzel*, worth all the Arcadian romances and suppositious descriptions of the

manners of the early golden age, with which some obsolete poets have inundated the fields of fiction. The hills of Mexico are just emerging from a prodigious flood, occasioned by a comet's transit. Koxkox, a boy, supposes himself to be the only person who escaped from the all-engorging waters. After some years of solitary wandering, he meets Kikequetzel, a young girl, preserved singly by a no less extraordinary accident. They mutually make love according to the dictates of nature: they invent a language by help of their few recollections; and they are happy with the slight toil of providing for themselves and their offspring, for whose improvement they endeavour to revive a few of the simpler antediluvian arts. Unfortunately, in one of her excursions, Kikequetzel is surprized by a strong middle-aged man, Tlaquatzin, who had also weathered the deluge on some distant mountain; and who eagerly detains and forcibly enjoys her. Unconscious of crime, she brings him to her home. Koxkox experiences a diminution of happiness by the division of her attentions. He now rambles to a distance, and finds some women whom he brings to the colony. A promiscuous intercourse establishes itself. All are made miserable and inimical to each other. The loss of domestic happiness by the cessation of reciprocal attentions, the annihilation of the paternal and filial affections by the uncertainty of relationship, a consequent carelessness for the progeny, the premature exhaustion of the young, and the utter desertion of the old, afflict the incipient community. They sink into a brutal savagism, and are dispersed by reciprocal war.

This novel, written in 1770, is a fortunate attack on Plato's system of agamy, as it has been called, which some foreign philosophers had then lately revived. It

well describes to the speculatist the real state of nature. It may assist in convincing the practical world that other inconveniences, beside the breach of civil and religious laws, are brought on society by transient and adulterous intercourse; and that it is highly expedient for all, that each should confine himself to a single companion for life;—in a word, that he should submit to the political institution of marriage. A translation of this novel closes the Tales of Yore, 3 vol. 1810.

To this volume are annexed *four dissertations:*—on Rousseau's Idea of our Original Condition, on his suggested Experiments for ascertaining the true State of Nature, on the perpetual Improveability of Mankind, and on the supposed Decrease of the Human Stature. These disquisitions display an universal acquaintance with the appertaining literature, with the voyages and travels of those who have visited the ruder nations, and with the sagas and romances of those who have described the heroic ages of now civilized societies. They are not drawn up with logical regularity, but with an excursive fanciful playfulness, with frequent flashes of mild wit, with an apparent desultoriness ever mindful of its end, and with a cornucopian opulence of thought and allusion.

The fifteenth volume contains the *Travels of Abulfauaris*, a novel written in ridicule of the missionary spirit. Abulfauaris was a priest at Memphis; who, having visited the interior of Africa and found a nation of negroes, naked, innocent, idle, and happy, but possessed of many things highly prized in Ægypt, contrives to be put at the head of a mission to introduce the mysteries of Isis, and to traffic with the manufactures of Ægypt. He teaches them a multitude of wants and vices: he gratifies his avarice at the expense

of their collective toil, and his lust at the price of their domestic felicity. He leaves the negroes, clad indeed, and industrious, but tending to a servile dependence on the few; and a prey to the licentiousness and mistrust, to the envy and rapacity, of semi-civilization.

Some dialogues, in which the student of Shaftesbury's Characteristics may be discerned, with several political and occasional essays and letters, terminate this portion of the collection.

The sixteenth volume of the works of this singular and voluminous writer opens with the fragment of *Cyrus*, an epic poem, attempted in German hexameter, but broken off at the end of the fifth book, either by the weariness or the prudence of the author. The Cyropædia of Xenophon was to have supplied the fable, and to have furnished the outline of those exploits which raised the great Cyrus to the throne of the Medes and Persians. The Manichæan system, which ascribes to two distinct gods the formation and government of the universe, and to their hostile interference the good and evil of nature;—which surrounds Oromaz with an hierarchy of beneficent angels, the messengers of blessing to men; and environs his antagonist Ahriman with subordinate legions of dæmons, the instruments of mischief, vengeance, and desolation;—which ascribes to every human individual a good and evil spirit, a guardian and a tyrant of his conduct;—which encourages the emblematic worship of Mithras, the seraph of the sun, the mediator to mankind of the best gifts of creation:—this system, which the Magi taught, even before it was ratified by the miracles of Zerdusht, was to have furnished an appropriate mythology for the machinery of the poem. Yet, in all probability, the peruser of these five books will not deeply regret

the suspension of so magnificent a task. The hero, a very Tamerlane in sentiment and in conduct, is, like the pious Æneas, less interesting than faultier men. The versification is smooth, indeed, and stately, and ornamented, according to all the rules of art, with the usual contrivances and figures of sublime poetry: but it wants glow, originality, and fascination. The maxims of morality are turned with the same neatness, and scattered with the same profusion, as those which render Voltaire's Henriad so instructive: but the epic poet should teach more by example than by precept; —when most didactic, he is commonly least attractive.

The fine story of *Araspes and Panthea*, originally intended for an episode to this epopæa, has been cast by the author in a more dramatic mould, and is diffusely related and delicately commented in a series of long philosophical prose dialogues. Through this whole volume, the lover of Xenophon's writings will wander with patient reminiscence.

The seventeenth volume exactly includes another epic fragment, of less lofty pretensions. *Idris and Zenide* is a fairy-tale, left half-told, like " the story of Cambuscan bold," and the four Facardins of Count Hamilton; to which, in the spirit of its incident, it bears considerable resemblance. In merry mood, the ghost of Gabalis,[8] or the sylph Capriccio,

—— ille ciens animos et pectora versans
Spiritus, a capreis montanis nomen adeptus,

with airy fingers wove the shot-silk tissue of this motley story. Idris has seen and loves the beautiful Zen-

[8] As the mythology of *Idris and Zenide* is derived from the *Entretiens sur les Sciences secretes du Comte de Gabalis:* and as Pope, although the English commentators have omitted to notice it, is also indebted to this singular work of M. de Villars for the machinery employed in his *Rape of the Lock*, perhaps it may not be unwelcome to subjoin a short extract.

" If you have this noble ambition, as the figure of your nativity convinces me,

ide queen of Ginnistan. To the possession of her is annexed dominion over the *four* races of genies: but this honor is reserved for a spotless mortal, who shall

consider maturely whether you are capable of renouncing every thing which might prove an obstacle to your views."—He paused, and looked at me attentively, as if desirous of reading in my very heart. The word *renounce* had startled me. I doubted not he was about to propose my renouncing baptism or salvation. "Renounce!" said I with inquisitive hesitation. "Yes, (replied he,) and begin by so doing. Sages will never admit you into their society, unless you immediately renounce whatever is incompatible with the true wisdom: it cannot dwell along with sin. You must (added he, in a whisper) renounce all carnal intercourse with women."

I burst into laughter at the odd proposal. "You let me off very cheap, (I replied,) if only women are to be renounced, that has been done this many a year: but as Solomon, who was no doubt a greater sage than I shall ever be, could not help relapsing, will you tell me how you initiated gentlemen manage? of what sort of *agnus castus* is your tree of knowledge, and what inconvenience would there be, if, in the paradise of philosophers, every Adam had his Eve?"

"You ask mighty questions; (said he, deliberating within himself whether he should vouchsafe an answer;) but as I perceive you can so easily detach yourself from womankind, I will tell you one of the reasons which have obliged the adepts to exact this condition from their aspirants. When you shall be enrolled among the children of the philosophers, and your eyes fortified by the use of the holy elixir, you will discover that the elements are inhabited by very perfect creatures, of the knowledge of whom the sin of Adam deprived his unfortunate posterity. The immense space between earth and sky has other inhabitants than birds and flies; the ocean other guests than whales and sprats: the earth was not made for moles alone, nor is the desolating flame itself a desert.

"The air is full of beings of human form, proud in appearance, but docile in reality, great lovers of science, officious toward sages, intolerant toward fools. Their wives and daughters are masculine Amazonian beauties——"

"How! you do not mean to say that spirits marry?"

"Be not alarmed, my son, about such trifles: believe what I say to be solid and true, and the faithful epitome of cabalistic science, which it will only depend on yourself one day to verify by your own eyes. Know then that seas and rivers are inhabited as well as the air; and that ascended sages have given the name of Undanes, or Nymphs, to this floating population. They engender few males; women overflow; their beauty is extreme; the daughters of men are incomparably inferior.

"The earth is filled down to its very centre with Gnomes, a people of small stature, the wardens of treasures, mines, and precious stones. They are ingenious, friendly to man, and easy to command. They furnish the children of sages with all the money they want, and ask as the reward of their service only the honor of being commanded. Their women are small, very agreeable, and magnificent in their attire.

"As for the salamanders, who inhabit the fiery region, they wait on the sages, but without any eagerness for the task: their females are rarely to be seen."—"So much the better: (interrupted I:) who wishes to fall in with such apparitions, and to converse with so ugly a beast, as a male or female Salamander?"—"You are under a mistake; (replied he;) such may be the idea of ignorant painters or statuaries, but the women among the Salamanders are very beautiful, and more so than any others, inasmuch as they belong to a purer element. I pass over the description of these nations, because you may yourself, if so disposed, see them at your leisure, and observe in person their raiment, their food, their manners, their wonderful laws and subordination. You will be yet more charmed by the beauty of their minds than of their bodies: but you will not be able to avoid pitying these unfortunates, when they inform you that their souls are mortal, and that they have no hope of that eternal fruition of the Supreme Being, whom they know and adore religiously. They will tell you that being composed of the purer particles of the elements

resist the amorous enticements of the most beautiful females of each subordinate class of *elemental* spirits. The first canto introduces the knight unlacing his armure; in order to bathe in a wood-girt rivulet. He is surprised by a *nymph* of exquisite loveliness, who vainly assails his constancy, and who is at length seized by the supervening Itifal, a Sacripant of knighthood. The adventures in general are spun out and interrupted by

which they inhabit, they live indeed for ages, but then dissolve. Ah, what is time compared with eternity! The thought of separating into unconscious atoms deeply afflicts them: we have great difficulty in consoling them.

"Our forefathers in true wisdom, who spoke with God face to face, complained to him of the lot of these people. God, whose mercy is without end, revealed to them that a remedy might be found for this woe, and inspired them with the information, that in like manner as man, by contracting an alliance with God, has become a partaker in the divine nature, so the Sylphs, Gnomes, Undanes, and Salamanders, by an alliance contracted with man, may become co-heirs of immortality. Thus a Nymph or a Salamander becomes immortal, and capable of that beatitude to which we aspire, when she is fortunate enough to marry a sage, and a Gnome or a Sylph ceases to be mortal the day he marries a human virgin.

"Hence the error of the first century into which Justin the Martyr, Tertullian, Clement the Alexandrian, the christian philosopher Athenagoras, Cyprian, and other writers of those days have fallen. They were aware that these elemental semi-men pursued an intercourse with girls, and were thence led to believe that the fall of the angels proceeded from their having indulged a love of women. Some Gnomes, desirous of becoming immortal, had wooed with presents of jewels certain daughters of men: and these authors, rashly trusting to their own misinterpretations of the book of Enoch, imagined that by sons of God, (are not all creatures such?) the angelic race was to be understood. But undoubtedly the Sylphs, and other elementary spirits, are the real children of Elohim.

"In order to obtain an empire over the Salamanders, it is necessary to purify and exalt the element of fire which is within us: for each of the elements, purified, is a loadstone which attracts the corresponding spirits. The familiarity of the inferior orders is most easily had. Swallow daily ever so little pure air, water, or earth, which has been alchemically exposed to the sun's rays in a globe of glass hermetically sealed, and you will behold in the atmosphere the fluttering republic of the Sylphs, Nymphs will swim to meet you at every river's brink, and the treasure-wardens display before you their imperishable hoards.

"How do you know that Nymphs and Sylphs die?"—"Because they tell us so, and we see them die."—"How should that be, since intercourse with you renders them immortal!"—"That would be a difficulty, if the number of sages approached that of these nations, and if there were not many among them who prefer dying to the risk of such an immortality as they see in possession of the dæmons. Satan inspires these apprehensions; there is nothing he would not do to prevent these poor creatures from becoming immortal by an alliance with us. But, my son, as Sylphs acquire an immortal soul by contracting an alliance with men predestined to salvation, so those men who have no right to eternal glory, those vessels of wrath to whom immortality would be a fatal gift, and for whom the Messiah has not died, can acquire absolute mortality by an alliance with the elemental spirits. Thus you see the adept is every way a winner: if predestined for election, he leads with him into paradise the Sylph whom he has imortalized; if for reprobation, she delivers him from the horrors of the second death."

flat conversations. In the fifth book, the charms of Amenoe, a *salamandrine*, equally fail in exciting reciprocal ardor in the faithful hero. Lila, a *sylph*, and Salmacina, a *gnome*, were probably intended in some future canto also to endanger, without overpowering the continence of Idris:—but Wieland no doubt began to feel that, however he might interrupt such incidents by the single combat with Itifal, by the adventure of the Centaur's castle, or even by the elegant and tender history of Zerbin, the possessor of Aladdin's lamp; yet the perpetual recurrence of a Zulica wooing a reluctant Joseph (but too familiar already in his other works) would, in a single poem, pall on the imagination even of the libidinous. He began to feel that it would be unworthy of his growing powers to unlock the whole seraglio of his beauty-stored fancy, and to lead out in antic dance the untired graces of his metamorphosing descriptions, for the embellishment of adventures scarsely less whimsical than those of the modern Amadis, and scarsely less ignobly indecent than those with which the younger Crebillon was inspired in the musky atmosphere of the *toilette* and the *boudoir*. The versification is in *ottave rime* of loose structure, the two triplets being interwoven at pleasure: the stanzas, though less condensed and less rounded, are no less easy and lively than those of *Tassoni*.[9]

[9] Author of *La Secchia rapita*.

§ 11.

Reviewal of Wieland's Collective Works continued, vol. XVIII *—Geron the courteous—The Water-trough—Pervonte—Winter's Tale—The Mule without a bridle—Hann and Gulpenheh—Lay of the little Bird—Translations of Geron—and of the King of the Black Isles—Criticism.*

THE eighteenth volume consists of *Fabliaux* in verse, and contains some of the most fortunate energies of the epic muse of Wieland; who always excels in execution rather than in invention, and is more successful in improving on the rude fablers of the thirteenth century, than in the composition of adventures wholly new.

The first tale rehearses a natural and fine incident, detached from the old French romance entitled *Gyron le Courtois;* whence also Luigi Almanni drew the basis of his tedious heroic poem. In the *Bibliothèque Universelle des Romans,* an abridgement of this storybook occurs, executed by the skilful hand of Tressan; who considers it, next to *Tristan de Leonnois,* as the most important record concerning the knights of the Round Table. The adventure of Sir Geron with the lady of Malouen is here separately told in a species of blank verse, of which the antiquated simplicity well suits the honest spirit of the history. In this little but admirable story, as in every other production of our author, no feature is more remarkable than his profound know-

ledge of the subject. Of the many champions introduced, each is mentioned in a manner strictly consonant with the mass of tradition; no where do we find an aberration from the fictions received; no where an anachronism of costume or idea: the device on every shield is allotted aright with the accuracy of an antiquary: every speech, every gesture, harmonizes with the *established* character of the personage. Such leaves as these should be turned over with daily with nightly hand by those who aspire to relate our tales of yore, in a manner worthy of amusing the nineteenth century.

The Water-trough is selected from Legrand's *Contes devots, pour servir de suite aux Fabliaux du treizième siècle*, &c. and is well adapted by its comic peculiarity to inculcate the author's favourite philosophy, which is industrious in satirizing asceticism.

Pervonte, a comic tale, in three parts, is borrowed from the *Pentamerone* of Giam-battista Basili, who, under the feigned name of Abbatutis, published at Naples, in 1674, a volume of tales: it will serve to recommend the virtue of contentment.

The Winter's Tale, which is taken from the first volume of the Arabian Nights, comprises the story of the fisherman, and of the young King of the Black Isles; and, by very slight modifications of the incidents, it has acquired a wholeness and a connection which are seldom apparent in eastern composition, without having lost any of its native hold on the fancy.

The Mule without a Bridle is well known to the metrical romancers of our own country. This refashionment, again, by a slight but exquisitely dextrous improvement of the circumstances, is become a most lively lay. *Hann* and *Gulpenheh*, and *the Lay of the little Bird*, also occur: but as the two best poems

in the volume probably are the first and the fourth; that is, Geron the Courteous, and the Winter's Tale; I shall content myself with translating these.

GERON THE COURTEOUS.

Arthur, before his hall at Cramalot,
Begirt with thirty knights, was holding court,
Under a dase of velvet, fring'd with gold.
Between him, and her Lancelot, the queen
Guenara sat. Twelve maidens, couth to give
The sweetest meed of love to whoso earns it,
Stood bashfully the royal dame beside;
And round about, on the tall branchy oaks,
Hung glittering in the sun-shine shields and spears,
While thirty lads held in the shade hard by
As many horses, well caparison'd.

When lo! from forth the forest a black knight
Alone came riding. He drew near, alighted,
On his right knee made to the queen obeisance,
Then rose, and stood before king Arthur, taller
By head and shoulders than the other knights.
He bow'd and said, "King, wilt thou grant a boon,
Such as one knight may of another ask?"

The king with wonder look'd upon the stranger,
And all with wonder view'd his stately form,
And heard his speech, and silently awaited
What boon he was to sue for. Arthur spake:
"Sir knight, make known thy wish; I grant thy prayer."

The stranger bow'd a second time, and said:
"To you, puissant sir, and to these knights
Beside you, let it not unwelcome prove,
In honor of all lovely wives and maids,
As well as to make known, whether the prize

Of knighthood appertains to the new knights,
Or to the old, with me, one after the' other,
Here in the open green to try a joust."

King Arthur, and his band of thirty knights,
Fellows of the Round Table all of them,
Were not the men to let a boon like this
Be ask'd a second time. Instead of answer,
Toward the trees whereon their lances leaned,
And where, beside their steeds, the pages stood,
They severally ran with cheerful speed.

Now Arthur and his thirty famous peers,
With bucklers on their arms, their horses mounted,
And rode, with levell'd shafts, on to the plain,
Where the strange knight had taken stand already.
Foremost king Arthur rode. Both couch'd their spears,
And, cover'd with their shields, their vizors louted,
Spurring their horses, at each other ran
So forcibly, the ground beneath them shook;
When, as they were about to meet in onset,
The stranger held his spear aloof, receiv'd
On his firm shield the stiff thrust of the king,
So that the spear shiver'd in many splinters,
And Arthur scarsely could with effort keep
Firm in his stirrups. But unshaken sat
The sable knight, and, soon as his warm steed
Had spent his spring, he turn'd, rode to the king,
And courteously address'd him: "God forbid
That I should use against you, noble sire,
My arm or weapon; order me, as one
Bound to your service both by choice and duty."

The lofty Arthur look'd on him amaz'd,
And to the tent return'd. Then Galaric,
His nephew, second son to Lot of Orcan,
Steps rashly forth, for combat eager. Sure
Of victory, he swings the quivering spear,
And couches it; against his broad breast clanks

The golden-eagled shield. Now with fierce thrust
He rushes on, but, by a gentle bend
Avoided, harmless slid his weapon's point
'Neath the black knight's left arm, whose surer shaft
Just then smote him a stunning blow, so home,
His senses quell, his tottering knees unknit,
He drops, and covers with his length the ground.

To' avenge his brother's fall, Sir Galban came,
The elder son of Lot, his name is heard
When of invincibles discourse is held;
But this time to his lady he forgot
To recommend himself, or fortune mock'd him;
For the black knight served him like Galaric.

An equal fate fell on the other nephews
Of Arthur, Egerwin and Galheret,
And on Bliomberis, and Lionel,
The noble sons of king Boort of Gannes,
Eke on the never-weary, ever-merry,
Sir Dinadel of Strangor. All of these
Had often stretched a brave man on the earth;
Now came their turn to be for once o'erthrown.

"Heigh!" says Sir Gries, king Arthur's seneschal,
In words the courtier but in deeds the knight,
"Ne'er be it said or sung, in foreign lands,
That Arthur's messmates, like as many nine-pins,
By the first strolling champion were knock'd down;
Black as he is, the stranger is no devil."
Half jesting, half in earnest, with these words
He spurr'd his courser. He had carefully,
Out of a heap of spears, beside the tent,
Chosen the heaviest; but him nought avail'd
His foresight, his rash courage, or the glibness
Of his keen tongue. The black knight lifted him
High in the air, and let him fall amain.
His squire soon helped him on his legs again:
Back to the tent with muttering limp'd Sir Gries.

The others follow'd in their turns, bold knights,
Unwont to turn their backs on any' adventure
Howe'er unpromising, or yield to man:
To break a lance was but a sport to them,
They would have stripped a forest of its wood;
Yet of them all not one, not one withstood
The forceful onset of the unknown knight;
Each in his turn was from the saddle hurl'd.

Thus to behold the whole Round Table foil'd,
Griev'd to the heart Sir Lancelot of the Lake,
The only one of all the thirty, who
Remain'd unconquer'd. This Sir Lancelot
Was the fair queen's own knight; for love to her
He had done many deeds, and in repayment
Many a sweet kiss, and many a glowing clasp,
Had been vouchsaf'd in secret. No one messmate
Of the Round Table was than him more fraught
With manliness and beauty. In the presence
Of his fair mistress, nothing seems so easy
As to unhorse the stoutest javelin-splitter
On the wide earth. And yet he look'd astonish'd
At the black knight; for what had newly chanc'd
Ne'er chanc'd before, since the Round Table stood.

"If the black art it be which shields this heathen,"
Says Lancelot softly to the queen, "Fair lady,
I pray thee don't forsake thy faithful knight;
Though hell for the black champion strive united,
If but your eye smile on me, on my side
Is heaven." When he thus had said, the queen
Allow'd him in her lovely eyes to read
(For seemliness before so many hearers
Closed up her lips) an answer, which upswell'd
The big heart in his bosom. With loose rein,
His shield aloof, his lance press'd to his side,
He ran, and both the knights so forcibly
Jostled against each other, horse and man,
That the snapt shafts were shiver'd in their fists,

And shield and helmet met together clanging.
But nought avail'd to Lancelot his lady's
Kind glances; him the black knight's force outweighs,
He totters, drops the rein, grows giddy, sinks,
And lies where lay before him all his messmates.

Calmly the stranger from his horse alights,
Coaxes with friendly hand his reeking back,
And his warm chest, takes off the foamy bit,
Ungirds the saddle, and dismisses him,
With a kind pat, to graze about the green;
Then turns, as came he from an airing merely,
Cheerful and unreserv'd, with his accustom'd
Grave elderly slow step, back to the tent.

With eyes askance the knights avoid his gaze,
And look at one another, as if asking
Can you bear this? but Arthur from the tent
Advanc'd with dignity, held out his hand,
And thus address'd the stranger: "Noble knight,
We have, I think, bought of you dear enough
The right to see the face of one, who thus
Can heave my thirty comrades from the saddle."

No sooner had the king vouchsaf'd these words,
Than the strange knight unhasp'd his helm, and rais'd it;
When lo! the curls were white as snow that hung
About his skull; in all the majesty
Of unenfeebled age the hero stood,
A stately handsome man, though manifold
The wrinkles were that furrow'd his high forehead,
And though his shoulders, still unstooping, bore
The burden of a hundred years of toil.

On seeing him, King Arthur and his knights
Again grew warm about the heart, they throng'd
Wondering around the stranger, clasp'd his hand,
While on his countenance their looks repos'd
Kindly, like sons who meet unhop'd a father.

"My name is Branor, (said the ancient knight,)
Branor the Brown. Thy father, royal Arthur,
The far-renown'd Pendragon Uther, still
Trotted his horse of stick about the court,
When Branor sallied forth o'er hill and dale
In quest of ventures. These old mossy oaks
I recollect no taller than a spear.
Thy father was to me an honour'd master,
And a kind friend. We often rode together,
And broke, in jest and earnest, many a lance.
May blessings light upon his noble son!
It does my old eyes good to see young men
Not yet quite fallen off from their forefathers."

While thus they spake, the sun was setting. Arthur,
His queen, the ladies, and the thirty knights,
With Branor in the midst, now turn'd their steps
Toward the castle-gate at Cramalot,
Where a repast stood waiting in the hall.

A purfled canopy o'erhung the seat
Of Arthur and his queen; an ivory stool
Was plac'd between them for the worthy Branor.
When these were seated, others took their places,
In order due, beside the spacious board.
Now twenty youths in pewter dishes brought
The steaming food, and twenty others waited
At the rich side-board, where from silver ewers
Stream'd ale, mead, wine; and trumpets shook the hall,
As often as the two-eared cup went round.

When appetite was sated, lofty talk
Of deeds, of champions, and of court-emprize,
Prolong'd their stay till midnight, and all eyes
Fasten'd upon the stranger; whensoe'er
He op'd his lips to parley, one might then
Have heard a spider on the cornice spin.

King Arthur took the old man's hand, and said:
"Until to-day my eyes have ne'er beheld,
Sir Branor, one so stout and merciful:
God help me, but I should have lik'd to know
The fathers who begot such sons as these."

Him the old knight replied to in this wise:
"Sire king, I 've lived a hundred years and more,
Many a good man upon his nurse's lap
I 've seen, and many a better help'd to bury.
As yet there is no lack of doughty knights,
Or lovely ladies worthy of their service;
But men, like those of yore, I see not now,
So full of manhood, firmness, frankness, sense,
To honor, right, and truth, so tied and steadfast,
With hand and heart, and countenance, so open,
So without guile, as were king Meliad,
Hector the Brown, and Danayn the Red,
And my friend Geron, still surnamed the Courteous,
Such men, by God! I ne'er shall see again."

Here the old man's voice faulter'd, and he bow'd
His head, and paused. And all were silent too
For a long time: none dared to interrupt
The holy stillness, *till at length Guenara*
Wink'd to Sir Lancelot, *who understood her,*
And thus to Branor said: "*We, ancient sir,*
Are all too young to have known *the knights you mention;*
Only in you, who knew them, *they still live.*
'T would be some solace to us, from the one
Spar'd to our times, to hear of them and theirs."

King Arthur and the queen, and all the knights,
Chim'd in with Lancelot's prayer: not aloud,
Yet not unheeded, the young ladies plead,
And by the stooping eye, and colouring cheek,
Bewray a bashful curiosity.

Then Branor, nodding friendly, look'd at them,
And said, " Your very prayer is courtesy;
Old age prates willingly, as well you know,
And loves to talk about the good old times
That are no more, in which, as in a dream
Of bliss, it still can lingering stray delighted.
I 'll tell you of the noblest man I knew,
Of Geron,—'t is full seventy years and more
Since a strange accident brought us together.

" I was on horseback, strolling through the forest
In quest of some adventure, when a storm
Assail'd me suddenly: I sought for shelter
Under a cavern, where I soon perceiv'd
A narrow path, which led into the mountain.
Downwards, and ever darker, grew the way,
Then bent aside; and I beheld before me
What seem'd a sepulchre—a hollow vault
Hewn in the solid rock by human hands.
Within it hung a lamp, at whose faint light
I could discern, as were they hallow'd corses,
Two ancient knights in still solemnity
Sitting beside each other. Even now,
Though seventy years have since that time gone by,
An awful shudder comes with the remembrance.

" It was as if the sight of me awaken'd
Them both from gentle slumber. Not astonish'd,
With friendly calmness their eyes turn'd upon me,
And seem'd to welcome once again the strange
And long-miss'd sight of man. With hollow voice
They greeted me, and said they had been toss'd
Full long enough upon the waves of life,
And were retir'd to this deep hermitage,
Here in the tomb to wait the stroke of death;
That with the world they pass'd for dead already,
As those who sought them found them there no longer.
Their narrow wants the spirits of the mountain,
Who sometimes told them what the living do,

Came to supply. The name of one was Brehus:
The other's Geron,—Geron senior,
He who in France had reign'd, and to his son
Gave up the sovereignty, that he might live
To knighthood wholly. Soon a like resolve
Came on the son; he too resign'd his kingdom
To a still younger brother,—sought adventures
For many years, and finally came hither,
With his old father in this sepulchre
To pass in prayer, and penitence, and fasting,
The weary remnant of a busy life.
'There you behold his grave,' the old man added;
'But where my second son has been inter'd
I cannot learn. The French king Faramond
Robb'd him of life and throne. One more remains
Yet of my race and blood,—my namesake too,—
Geron the Courteous. What from time to time
The spirits tell me of him is the food
That will not let me die. He is a man,—
May God reward him for it,—who preserves
My name and house in honor.' Then he paus'd.

"Upon the spot I form'd the resolution
To seek this Geron; and to Uther's court
I bent my quest; and there I heard much praise
Of Geron's virtues: but he was afar.
I follow'd,—found him,—and admir'd his beauty,
The vigor of his arm, his dauntless courage,
And, above all, his honourable heart.
He became gracious to me. I went with him
To many a tournament,—to many a venture,—
And was the witness of his latter deeds.

"He was but a mere boy when his poor father
Lost, in the strife with Faramond, his throne
And life. An old friend of his ancestors,
Hector the Brown, contrived to save the stripling;
Fled with him into Britain, and became
The teacher of his youth, his willing master

In all the arts of knighthood. Geron was to him
As his own son. Once, when in a great battle
The old man was much wounded, Geron caught him
Up in his arms, struck down with lion-fury
Whoever sought to lay hands on his friend,
Bore him on his own back into the tent;
But to preserve his life it not avail'd.

"Old Hector, dying, handed his good sword
To the young man. 'There,' said he, 'take this gift;
I know none other who is after me
Worthier to wield it.' Mighty was the virtue
Of this tried weapon, rich its studded hilt,
And richer still th' enamell'd sheath of steel.
Upon the blade in golden letters stood:
'This trusty blade let none essay
For any purpose of foul play;
Fairly let him fight his way,
Honor be his proudest stay;
Shame to him who can betray,
Clad in lion-like array.'
The noble youth receiv'd this holy sword
Out of his dying foster-father's hand
With tearful eyes, and thought himself as rich
As had a kingdom been the last bequest.
And how he handled it, I now will give you
A proud example, if you are not already
Weary of listening to an old man's tale."

Then Lancelot of the Lake, and his dear lady,
The lovely queen, assur'd the hoary Branor,
In their own name, and that of all the guests,
They should be nothing loth to sit and listen,
Were he to talk to them the whole night long.
The old man, from beneath his gray eyelashes,
Shot a keen glance on Lancelot, and the queen;
And both their eyes sank down before the look
Of earnest worth,——and a short silence follow'd.

Branor continu'd thus: " At that time liv'd
In Britany a noble knight, surnam'd
Danayn the Red, who dwelt at Malouen;
Geron the Courteous was his constant comrade,
And dearest friend; together they had sworn
The bond to die for one another, and
Their fast affection was become a proverb.
The dame of Malouen, the wife of Danayn,
Was in all Britany the fairest woman,
Though 't is a shire renown'd for handsome ladies.
To look at her without quick thoughts of love,
Was held impossible. The first time Geron
Laid eyes upon her, in his heart he said,
Troth it would not be a dear purchase, if,
To pass a night in this sweet lady's arms,
A man forwent his life. And from that moment
He steadily forbore to meet her eyes;
Spoke seldom to her,—never by himself,
Nor else but in the presence of his friend,
Into whose honest heart and open eye
Suspicion came not. Months together sometimes,
And longer even, into foreign lands
They travelled for adventures to the courts
Of princes,—where at tournaments and skurries,
Fame could be earn'd; and, when they were come back
To Malouen, Sir Geron kept his way,
Renewed the silent covenant with his eyes,
So that who saw him always would have fancied
The lovely dame of Malouen to him
Was nothing more than any other woman.

" Unluckily, the lovely lady's heart
Was not so guarded as his own. She thought,
At the first glance, that Geron was the man,
Above all other men, to whom a lady
Could not refuse the recompense of love.
And heedlessly she let her eyeballs rove
Along his stately form, and gaz'd at him,
And ever and anon unconsciously

Her looks, her heart, observ'd how fair he was.
She calls it in her inmost soul but friendship,
But courtesy, and cheats herself with names,
Till she no longer from herself can hide
How deep the wound has eaten, nor from him
Who only can administer the cure.

"A woman's passion has a falcon-eye.
However Geron may conceal himself,
Soon as his eye meets hers, she can discern,
Or thinks she can discern, a secret glow
Beneath the smother'd fire,—a flush of love;
And, in this hope, she watches the occasion
To be with him alone; and, when she finds it,
Bewrays to him her hidden painfulness.

"Sin never tempted in a fairer form
A thing of flesh and blood. From her soft lips
All the persuasion of the ancient serpent
Flow'd;—on her heaving bosom breath'd seduction,
And beckon'd from her arms. Geron ne'er fought
So hard a fight before; but friendship,—truth,—
Hector and Danayn,—stand in stern array
Between him and the consort of his friend,
Like angels of the Lord with swords of flame.
'God wills it not, that I should dare abuse
A momentary weakness of the wife
Of my best friend,'—he said, and broke away.

"Embarrass'd,—speechless,—to behold her hopes
Thus disappointed, as he quitted her,
The culprit stood awhile, and would have sunk
With shame and grief, had it been doubtful to her,
Even for a moment, whether the coy knight
Had separated from her with contempt.
Her eyes, alas! had serv'd her but too well.
'He loves me,' so she thought; 'I could discern
The struggle in his soul; 't is not his heart
That is in fault;' and now the knight appears

To her the nobler for his sense of honor,—
Her love the nobler for his lofty worth.
She even for her weakness prais'd herself,
And let him read more freely in her eyes,
She gloried in it.

" This became to Geron
A hint no longer to expose himself
Beside the fair seducer; he set off
From Malouen, and went to Bruneval,
To visit in his castle there a knight.
Days slid away in hunting, jousting, feasting,
But Geron soon grew tired. 'Ah,' thought he,
'If Danayn were but here! without my friend
To live among these cold and stranger-people,
I can endure no longer.' Whether share
Of his annoy the dame of Malouen
Perhaps occasion'd, Geron hardly car'd
To ask himself; but, calling for his armure,
He got on horseback, and rode home again.

" Great was the joy, to see him there once more,
Of Danayn the Red, his faithful friend,
Who lov'd him so, as two twin-brothers hardly
Can love each other; and although so long
They had been comrades, and so seldom parted,
Yet in the castle neither squire nor damsel
Were wont to call him by his name, save Danayn
And his fair wife,—the rest, they always knew him
As the *Good Knight;* no other phrase had they
In all the castle, when they spoke of him.

" It happen'd now, while Geron was abiding
At Malouen, there came a dapper squire
Who brought to Danayn a message, that
In seven days there would be held at Morlaix
A stately tournament. 'So, help me God,'
Said Danayn, 'I 'll be there if I can.'

"Then Danayn the Red went to his friend,
And they agreed to be both at the tourney,
But unbeknown, and clad in common armure.

"The news of this soon spread throughout the castle,
And reach'd the dame of Malouen, who gladly
Heard of the festival; for, as Morlaix
Was but a half-day's journey from their dwelling,
She hoped Sir Danayn would, as is the custom,
Take her, too, to this splendid tournament;
For in those days there was in all the land
No form so fair to grace the public sittings.

"And Geron too, she thought, would come with them,
And she should have the pleasure to behold
How he, among the kings, and knights, and nobles,
Would show himself the bravest and most handsome.
For still her heart on Geron hung, though he
Had so repell'd her love. He was, and is,
Still in her eyes the only man;—with him
By day and night her inmost soul is busy;
His beauty, and his noble sense of honor,
Is all her thought, and she would rather be
His lady than the wife of higher men;
And secretly she vow'd within herself
Never to turn her heart to any other:
And could she, at the cost of life, become
His love, she should esteem it her best glory.

"Thus was the dame of Malouen dispos'd
When she determin'd to attend the tourney;
And the same evening she convers'd about it
Much with her husband. Then Sir Danayn,
Benignant-smiling, gave her leave to go.
'Lady,' said he, 'as you are bent upon it,
I am quite content it be so; and will give you
A stately escort, such as may become
A person of your rank, and age, and figure;
Damsels to wait on you, and knights to guard you

In safety to and fro, shall not be wanting.
Still I cannot be one. Geron and I
Have laid a plan to go in vulgar armure,
And namelessly to step into the lists.'

" Now when the time was come, the faithful friends,
With but one squire to carry shields and swords,
Set off, and through bye-ways arriv'd at Morlaix,
As if they came elsewhence; but the fair lady,
By six-and-twenty knights accompanied,
On the high road in loitering state proceeded.

" When the two friends approach'd the moated castle
Upon the plain, Sir Flounce accosted them,
A young conceited boaster, who in knighthood
Pretended to be mightily accomplish'd,
And who at all times, proper or improper,
Would crow and sneer most manfully at any
Who came across the pathway of his speech.
When he beheld the knights so calmly trotting,
And mark'd their rough black armure, their coarse, cheap,
And unassuming, plain caparisons,
He gallop'd toward them, and at once defy'd them
To break a lance with him upon the spot.
They civilly excus'd themselves; they wish'd
Against to-morrow to reserve their efforts.
But all was said in vain,—the more politely
They spoke, the ruder grew Sir Flounce's tongue;
And when, unheeding him, they went their way,
He jested, with a knight of the Round Table
Who stood beside him, at the two black fellows
So loudly, that they overheard his speech.

" Thereat Sir Danayn was moved to anger,
And said to Geron, 'Brother, do you hear
Those knights, who fancy they may scorn unpunish'd
Men such as we.' But Geron answer'd him,
'Do as I do, and let them say their say,
Their empty prate will neither make us better,

Nor make us worse; and if they scoff at us
To-day, perhaps to-morrow they 'll repent it,
And think themselves the simpletons, and wish
They 'd held their tongues. Too many such are seen
To stroll about the country, full of airs,
And fond of cutting jokes at every one,
And spitting their conceit 'twixt every tooth.
I never trouble myself what they say;
And when they speak, 't is just the same to me
As were they silent.' 'You are right, by God,'
Said Danayn, 'let them cackle as they will,
He is a blockhead who gives heed to that.'

" Sir Irwin, one of the most noble knights
Of the Round Table, heard with pain the language
Of the young man, who unprovoked had taunted
The quiet strangers; but Sir Flounce, to show
He fear'd them not, renew'd his gibes. For this
Small was his gain, as both the knights rode on,
Not heeding him, and either thought apart
To-morrow 't will be seen what stuff we are made of.

" Just as their hearts foretold, so happen'd it
Upon the day of tourney. Danayn
And Geron ousted all the other knights
From off their saddles. No one could prevent
Their carrying off the prize. And now began
A busy questioning from mouth to mouth
Who were these knights; but no one knew about them,
Except the dame of Malouen, who beheld
With heart's delight her Geron and his deeds;
For, though he came into the ring so plainly
In common armure, yet there was no other
Like him in grace and dignity of port.
And, when she saw him with the bickering blade
Drawn in his fist, and with the sable shield
Before his neck, though troops of knights rode by,
In plumed helmets, harness-waistcoats gay
With gold embroidery, bearing blazon'd shields,
Yet mark'd she none in the career but him.

" Of handsome women and of lovely damsels
Many had come to Morlaix on that day
To see and to be seen; but all of them
Beside the dame of Malouen appear'd
Like meadow-flowers around a blooming rose-bush;
And all the knights who gaz'd upon her beauty
Grew warm at heart; but none more ardently
Than Lak, the comrade of King Meliad,
Who, as if fetter'd by some powerful spell,
Could never turn from her his countenance.
He 's caught, thought Meliad within himself;
And, to make out the feelings of his friend,
Began to talk about her stately train
Of six-and-twenty knights. Sir Lak replied,
'Those six-and-twenty knights, however manful
They may believe themselves, would surely prove
For such a woman but a feeble guard.
So help me God, my dear king Meliad,
If in a forest this fair lady met me,
With only six-and-twenty for her escort,
I think I 'd snatch her from them every one.'

" Sir Danayn, intent upon the jousting,
Caught nothing of this speech. But, by some chance,
Sir Geron had been standing near enough
To hear what Lak was saying to the king;
And though his heart burnt in him, that a man
Should dare so speak concerning his friend's wife,
Yet, thought he, this must be no vulgar knight,
Who feels within him such a daring spirit.

" Geron then went up to him, and address'd him
In friendly guise, and let him understand
He was aware of what to Meliad
Sir Lak had spoken: 'I acknowledge it,'
Retorted Lak, 'nor should I shun the trial,
If you were one of these same six-and-twenty.'

" 'If so,' said Geron, 'and for woman's sake
You would engage with six-and-twenty of us,

It would no doubt be very easy for you
To snatch from us the honors of the tourney.'

" 'Done: let us try,' said Lak. King Meliad,
And Danayn who now approach'd, took part
In the defial, and it was agreed
Three times to joust; Sir Geron against Lak,
And Danayn against king Meliad.
At the first onset Danayn and Geron
Ran down amain their two antagonists.
The second time the chances were revers'd,
And the two friends were ousted from their saddles.
But, the third time, they both again prevail'd,
And kept with loud applause their twice-won prize.

" When night approach'd, there came to Danayn
A hasty messenger, with tidings that
The murderers of his nephew, whom he lour'd for,
Had a few hours ago been seen about
At no great distance. Instantly the knight
Set off in the pursuit, but said to Geron,
'Brother, a private business calls me hence,
Which cannot be delay'd; meanwhile go you
To Malouen, and there wait for me.' Then
He said as much to his wife, and she prepar'd
Next morning with her escort to return.

" Sir Geron had not yet forgot the words
Which Lak had spoken,—half, it seem'd, in earnest.
No sooner was the dame of Malouen
Gone from Morlaix, than he at distance follow'd.
And, sure enough, Sir Lak had risen early,
In order not to miss his lovely booty,
And deep within a lonely woody valley,
Through which she had to pass, was hid in ambush.
Soon as the escort came, he fell upon them,
Like to a sudden thunder-bolt from heaven,
Drove all the six-and-twenty to disperse,
Seiz'd on the lady, and rode off with her.

" Sir Geron had, by some misapprehension,
Not taken just the road the lady took,
And, turning on one side to seek the traces,
By great good luck he pounc'd upon the robber,
Who, with his lovely booty well content,
Came trotting on. The precious burden well
Deserv'd a combat unto life or death.

" Wringing her lovely hands, most anxiously
The lady call'd on every saint in heaven;
Made more vows for her friend than for herself;
But soon the brave one had remov'd all fear
About the issue: with a lion's fury
He grasp'd the rude aggressor, flung him down,
And made him to the mercy of the lady
Owe a dishonour'd life.

" How great the joy
Was hers, when thus she felt herself deliver'd
And by the hand of him whom best she lov'd.
Nor scarsely less was his to see her rescu'd,
And to have fitly punish'd the presumption
Of a wild rival. Both gaz'd on each other,
And remain'd speechless; their whole souls were seated
Now in their eyes. Around is only wood,
Silent and solitary; she and he
The only in the world. Ah! what a moment
For to forget a friend in.

" But Sir Geron,
Soon to himself restor'd, stept back and said,
'Lady, you now are ridded of this knight,
And can return to Malouen in peace,
At your own pleasure.'

" Him the lady answer'd,
'Most noble sir, to God and to your arm
Be everlasting thanks for my deliverance!
I had been else dishonour'd, if your courage

Had not preserv'd me in the threatened danger.
But what can I do now? My sorry people
Are all dispers'd,—the damsels and the knights,
And I am left alone.'

"The knight replied,
'Lady, be not uneasy; all your escort
Cannot be far away; they 'll soon collect
Again, and come about you. Let us ride,
Meanwhile, along this path, which certainly
Must lead us back into the beaten road.'
And with these words they rode together onwards.

"Now when the lovely dame of Malouen,
Freed from her terrors, saw herself alone,
And with the man above all others dear
To her whole soul, and thought within herself,
How at the tourney he surpass'd them all,
How nobly brave, how gently courteous, he
In every thing behav'd, her inner heart
Was so much mov'd, she hardly could conceive
What was the matter with her, what she ought
To say or to withhold. She wants to speak,
And yet the fear of being once again
Put off had terrors for her.

"Love invites her
Once more to tell him plainly what her heart
Desires; but Shame presses her lips together
When she would speak. On one side murmurs Love,
'Now, lady, without apprehension say
All that you feel, he 'll not again draw back;
You are so sweetly made in form and face,
He were not worthy of the name of knight,
If he could a third time decline the offer:
Venture it now securely.' Shame replies,
'Lady, beware to speak; the noble Geron
So truly and so steadily loves Danayn,
He would not for the world be faithless to him:

Depend upon it he withdraws again.'
And thus between her prompters she sat still,
And they rode on in silence a long while.

" Meanwhile Sir Geron, on his side, had also
No easy struggle to achieve; as often
As on the lady he let fall his eyes,
He grew so wishful that the thought would cross him:
O but for one full time to press that heart
Against his own, he 'd give his soul away.
To struggle any longer hardly seems
E'en possible, or fair to such a woman,
Who is so given to him. All conspires
To meet their common wishes; time and place,
So still, so lonely, can't occur again.
But thy friend's wife, thy brother-warrior's,
Who holds thee dearer than his very eyes.
No, God forbid that such a worthy knight
Should be dishonour'd by the man he trusts,
Against whose conduct he could ne'er permit
The least suspicion to shoot cross his soul!
How could'st thou ever in thy life again
Bear but to meet his eye-beam, or the look
Of any other man, who feels for honor;
How bear thyself with such a loaded conscience?

" In this turmoil of thought he journey'd on,
Riding behind her; yet he could not help
Each now and then to cast his eyes upon her,
And aye, the oftener he beheld, the more
Her beauty seem'd embellish'd. Twice or thrice
'T was on his tongue to tell her so, had shame
Not shut his mouth.

" At length the lady fair,
Her bosom wanted to exhale its feelings,
Began to parley with Sir Geron, saying:
' God send you good adventures; my dear sir,
Inform me what of all things in the world

Best prompts a knight to deeds of bravery
And lofty courage?'

" Geron thus replied,
' True love, fair lady. Such a force hath love,
That it can make a daring man of cowards.'
' If it be so,' the lady recommenc'd,
' Love must indeed possess a mighty power.'
' Yes, truly,' said Sir Geron, ' so it does;
And, lady, know, I should not now, nor ever
In all my life have been the man Sir Lak
Felt me to be this day, had not my arm
Deriv'd its strength from love. Nor would Sir Lak,
Tho' one of the best knights, have had the power
To drive to flight the six-and-twenty riders
From Malouen, had love not steel'd his arm.'
' How,' said the lady, ' from your speech it seems
You too have felt the mightiness of love.'
' Lady, you speak the truth,' replied the knight;
' And I esteem myself a lucky man,
That I can truly boast my heart is bound
Unto the fairest woman in the world;
And only therefore I accomplish what
I else should not attempt. Believe me, lady,
If 't were not for the mightiness of love,
I should not in this tourney have perform'd
What you beheld. To love, and to my lady,
I am beholden for my every deed.'

" The noble dame of Malouen, when thus
She heard her hero speak, was inly pleas'd;
For her heart said to her, If Geron loves,
He must love thee, and not another woman.
And, when he ceas'd to speak, she took the word,
And said, ' My sir, God send you good adventures!
But tell me, without jesting, who the lady
May be, who seems to you the fairest woman
Of all the dames on earth, and is the dearest!'
' So help me God,' replied he, ' but the fairest

And dearest woman on the face of earth
To me, is no one other than yourself.
And this your own heart must already tell you
Is naked truth. Yes, my dear lady, you
Are she I love, as none e'er lov'd before.'

"'Sir,' said the dame again, 'what must I think
Of this strange speech? You cannot be in earnest,
And are but watching my too ready answer
To make a game of me. It is not long
Since, I too well remember the occasion,
When I said to you what you say to me,
And you a little harshly put me by.
And would you now persuade me, that you love
So wholly me. My dear good sir, what would you
Have me believe?'

"'My dearest lady,' said
Sir Geron then, 'for God's sake, do not give me
Such speeches any more. If I was then
Foolish and blind, don't punish me just now;
Accept me for your knight, and be assur'd,
Queen of my heart, there is no love more heartfelt
In all the world than mine.'

"The dame of Malouen
Glow'd with such glee to hear her knight talk thus;
It seem'd to her, as were she listening still,
When he had ceas'd to speak. She doubts no longer
Aught of his love, and feasts upon the thought
So comfortably, that she seems to breathe
And swim in floods of love,—is full of joy
And happiness; yet she can utter nothing,
As if afraid to break into her bliss
By speaking.

"Thus awhile they rode;
When a small pathway cross'd them in the forest,
Which led down to a well. And thither Geron

Guided his horse's rein, and said, ' My lady,
A weariness, remaining from the tourney
And from this morning's toil, is come upon me.
If you approve, I very much should like
To take some rest beside the well that 's yonder.'
' Sir,' said the lady, blushing, ' do your pleasure.'

" He took the pathway to the well, and she
Rode silent after him. When they were there,
Sir Geron first alighted, to a tree
Fasten'd his horse, and then put forth his hand
To help the dame of Malouen to dismount.

" A fresh green turf, hedg'd round with copse and bushes,
And pleasantly o'ershadow'd by the trees,
Grew there; it was a place as snug and quiet,
And fashion'd for repose, as could be wish'd.
There, when he took his lady from the horse
Into his arms, he gently sat her down.
Then he began to take his armure off
Slowly, and piece by piece; laid down his helmet,
And his black shield; unbuckl'd from his shoulders
The heavy pouldrons, plac'd them on the rim
Of the wall'd well; and the good sword upon them,
Which once the spotless knight, Hector the Brown,
Had wielded, and bequeath'd to him when dying;
And which, for its first owner's sake, to him
Was still so dear, he 'd not have taken for it
The very best of all King Uther's castles.

" But, in this moment of intoxication,
He thought but little of his sword, but little
Of the high duties to which *he* was pledg'd
Who, after Hector, should presume to wield it.
For the first time in his whole life forsook him
His faithfulness, his honor. A hot hunger
For the sweet fruits of love, alas! had stifled
The nobler feelings of his soul: and Geron

Is Geron now no longer, has forgotten
His Danayn,—forgotten his best self;
He hastens now, with wild and rash impatience,
Quite to disarm himself.

"Meanwhile the lady,
Sweetly asham'd, her lovely eyes cast down
Upon her lap, sat silent, scarsely daring
Even to breathe.

"And lo! it somehow happen'd,
That, just as Geron was approaching her,
He brush'd against the low wall of the well,
Where he had pil'd his weapons on each other,
And the good sword slid down into the water.
Now, when he heard the splash, he quickly leaves
The lovely lady, runs to save the sword,
And draws it out, and wipes it very dry;
And, as he look'd along it narrowly
To see if 't was uninjur'd, his eye caught
The golden letters on the blade inscrib'd
By Hector's order. As he read, he trembled.
He reads again; it was as had the words
Never before impress'd him. All the spell
At once was broke.

"He stands with the good sword
Bare in his hand, and sinks into himself:
'Where am I? God in heaven! what a deed
I was come here to do.' And his knees totter'd
Now at the thought. The sword still in his hand,
He on the margin of the well sat down,
His back toward the lady, full of sorrow,
And sinking from one sad thought to another.

"Now when the lady, who so late ago
Beheld him blithe and gay, thus suddenly
Perceiv'd him falling in strange melancholy,
She was alarm'd, and knew not what to think,

And came to him with gentle timid step,
And said, 'What ails you, Sir; what are you planning?'

"Geron, unheeding her, still bent his eyes
Steadfast upon his sword, and made no answer.
She waited long, and, as he gave her none,
She stepp'd still nearer, and with tenderest voice
Again repeated, 'My dear sir, what ails you?'
He, deeply sighing, answer'd, 'What I ail,—
May God in heaven have mercy on my soul!
Against my brother Danayn I have sinn'd,
And am not worthy now to live.' He spoke,
And once again began to eye his sword,
Then said, with broken voice: 'Thou trusty blade,
Into whose hands art thou now fallen? He
Was quite another man who us'd to wield thee.
No faithless thought e'er came across his heart
In his whole life. Forgive me: I no more
Can now deserve to wear thee. I 'll avenge
Both thee and him, who once hop'd better of me,
When to my keeping he intrusted thee.'
And now he rais'd his arm; and, ere the lady,
Helpless from terror, could attempt to hinder,
He ran his body through and through,—then drew
The weapon out, and would have given himself
Another stab, but that the dame of Malouen,
With all the force of love and of despair,
Fell on his arm.

"'Good knight, for God's sake spare
Your precious life; slay not yourself, and me,
So cruelly for nothing.'

"'Lady,' said he,
'Leave me my will. I don't deserve to live,
And wish to perish, rather than be false.'
The lady sobb'd aloud, and clung around him.

"While this was passing, Danayn return'd
From his excursion. He had found and punish'd
The murderers of his nephew; both had fallen
Beneath his hand, and he was hastening home
To join his wife and friend at Malouen.
And as he pass'd this forest, near the well
A shriek of woe assail'd him, and he turn'd
His horse, to seek the cause,—when, lo! he saw,
Stretch'd in his blood, Sir Geron, bleeding still;
And by him kneel'd alone, in speechless anguish,
Wringing her hands, the lady. Danayn,
Instead of asking questions, from his horse
Sprang, and proceeded to assist his friend.

"Geron refuses to accept relief,—
He will not live,—and to his friend accuses
Himself most bitterly,—hides nothing from him,
But his wife's weakness,—takes upon himself
The load of all the guilt,—and, when he thus
Had ended his confession, he held out
His hand, and said, 'Now then forgive me brother,
If you are able. But, O let me die,
And do not hate my memory; for repentance
Did come before the deed. My faithlessness
Was only in my heart. Be my heart's blood
The fit atonement.'

"Noble Danayn
Felt at this moment all the loftiness
Of his friend's virtue, more than he had ever;
So wholly bare lay Geron's heart and soul
Clear as his own before him; and he ask'd him
Most pressingly yet to forgive himself,—
Conjures him by their holy friendship still
To live,—and swears to him, that more than ever
He now esteems and loves him. Overcome
By such affection, Geron then consents

For his dear friend to live, accepts his care,
And on a bier is carried to a castle,
Where dwelt a good old knight, a friend of Danayn,
Whose daughter, beauteous in the next degree
To the fair dame of Malouen, was much skilled
In healing wounds. She knew, and secretly
She lov'd, Sir Geron; and her gentle care
In a few weeks restor'd him.

" But the wound,
Which this adventure of the well had given
To the fair dame of Malouen, was fatal.
To bear such sudden deep-felt rending pangs
Her soft heart was too weak. In heavy woe
She lay the whole long night, as in a fire;
Next day the fury of the fever broke
In wildness loose; and grew with such rapidity
That there was soon no hope. On the third day
She died; and Geron's name was her last word."

Here aged Branor paus'd. With earnest look
Silent he scann'd the ladies, and the knights,
Who sat around; and from the damsels' eyes
Still tears were trickling down their glowing cheeks,
And the knights' looks were downcast. But Guenara
The queen, who during the narration often
Grew pale as death, then red as fire again,
To cover her confusion, sighing, said,
" 'T is a most melancholy story."—" What
Became at last of Geron?" asked Sir Lancelot.
" After this story," said the aged Branor,
" I' have nothing more to tell."

Then royal Arthur
Rose from the table, and the rest arose;
And Arthur said to Branor, " Worthy knight,
There 's an apartment ready in the castle
For you to-night, and for as many days

As it may please you to remain with us."
" Sir king," replied the' old man, " God give you health
And fame; but I have made a solemn vow
To pass no night at courts on any errand."

The knights look'd at each other silently;
While Branor bow'd respectfully to Arthur
And to the queen,—resum'd his dress of armure,
Mounted his horse, and by the starlight rode
Back to his forest.

Mr. Robert Southey, great as a poet, greater as an historian, has so admirably given the antiquities of the romance on which the foregoing poem is founded, that I take the liberty of transcribing the entire passage from his erudite preface to the MORTE D'ARTHUR, 4to. *London*, 1817.

After observing (p. xvi) that the author of the Brut professes to have composed, or recompiled, the story of Meliadus de Leonnoys, at the request of King Henry of England, from the Latin,* in which it had been rudely and confusedly written by Master Rusticien de Pise, at the desire of an English king Edward; Mr. Southey proceeds thus:

" XIV. Gyron le Courtoys is the work of the same author, whose style indeed is distinctly marked, especially in dialogue, and who in his tone of morals is infinitely superior to all the other Romancers of this school.

" *Le Roman de Gyron le Courtois; translaté de Branor le Brun, le vieil Chevalier qui avoit plus de cent ans d'âge, lequel vint a la Cour du Roi Artus, accompagné d'une Demoiselle, pour s'éprouver à l'encontre des jeunes Chevaliers, lesquels étoient les plus vaillans, ou les jeunes, ou les vieux; et comment il abbatit le Roi Artus, et quatorze Rois qui en sa compagnie étoient, et pareillement tous les Chevaliers de la Table Ronde, de coups de lance: et traite ledit Livre, des plus grandes Adventures que jadis advinrent aux Chevaliers Errans; avec la devise et les armes de tous les Chevaliers de la Table Ronde. Paris, Ant. Verard, sans date, in fol. gotiq.*

" *Imprime a paris pour Anthoine Verard marchant libraire demourant a Paris pres petit pont deuant la rue neufue nostre dame a lenseigne Saint iehan leuangeliste. Ou au palais au premier pillier deuant la chappelle ou lon chante la messe de messeigneurs les presidens.*

" This romance begins with an adventure of Branor le Brun, a knight above an hundred and twenty years of age, who though he had not borne arms for forty years, comes to Camelot to try whether the knights of King Arthur's court were as good as those of his days. He is however so persuaded of their inferiority, that he only invites them to run at him, as at a *quintain*. Palamedes, Gawain, and many others unhorse themselves in doing this; but the old knight honours the king, Sir Tristram, and Sir Lancelot so much as to take a spear against them, and he overthrows them like so many children. An adventure of Tristram and Palamedes then follows (without any connection) which is in the Morte Arthur.

" Gyron is now introduced, and goes to Maloanc, the castle of his friend Danayn

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* Was not Latin used for rime? Montfaucon cites: " *Le Roman de Tristan et Iseult, traduit de Latin en Français par Lucas, chevalier sieur du chastel du Gast, pres de Salisberi, Anglais, avec figures*, Cod. No. 6776. Now the adventures of Trystan and Essylda are not likely to have been originally written in Latin, either in Wales, Cornwall, or Britany; but they are likely to have been written in rime, as metrical romances abounded there.

le Roux. The lady of Maloanc, Danayn's wife, falls in love with him, and tempts him twice, but without effect. They go to a tournament, where Meliadus and his friend Sir Lac are present; Sir Lac becomes enamoured of the lady, waylays her after the tournament, and wins her from her escort of five and twenty knights, but loses her himself to Gyron. Gyron unluckily has now caught from Sir Lac the love with which the lady herself had not been able to inspire him; his heart gives way to the temptation; he leads her, 'nothing loth,' to a fountain in the forest, and takes off his armour. 'At this point of time, when they were in this guise, ready to commit the villainy, then it happened that the spear of Gyron which was placed against a tree, fell upon his sword and made it fall into the fountain. And Gyron who, as ye have heard, loved this sword greatly, as soon as he saw it fall into the water, ran towards it, and left the lady. And when he came to the fountain, and saw that the sword was at the bottom of the water, he took it out, being greatly vexed, and drew it from the scabbard, and began to wipe it. And then he began to regard the letters which were written upon the sword; they had been cut there by reason of the good knight Hector le Brun. And these were the proper words which were there written: *Loyaulte passe tout, et faulsete si honnit tout, et decoit tous hommes dedans quals elle se herberge.*' Upon this his conscience smites him with such remorse for having sinned in intention, that he instantly stabs himself. The lady, who is called by no other name than La Belle Dame de Maloanc, prevents him from repeating the blow, and after a while Red Danayn finds them in this situation. The whole truth is acknowledged to him, and he, not to be wanting in generosity, loves Gyron more than ever for this his courtesy, as it is termed, and takes him home to Maloanc, where he is soon healed. During all this time Gyron is only known to this family, the rest of the world supposing him to be dead. A great deal concerning Hector le Brun is related by way of episode to King Meliadus, and Gyron occasionally hears stories of himself introduced with considerable skill, as well as interest, to raise his character.

"This part of the Romance, though interrupted with some episodical matter, has more unity of purpose than is usual in such works. There is no other division than that of chapters; but in what may be called the second part, the character, or more properly the conduct of the two friends is reversed. Red Danayn going to escort a damsel for Gyron, to whom she appertains, betrays his trust, and carries her off; Gyron pursues him, and overtaking him at last, defeats him after a desperate combat, and though he had determined to take his life, spares him for the sake of courtesy. Immediately afterwards he rescues him from a giant. The incidental parts in this division, are, a story of Galahalt le Brun, with whom Gyron in his youth had been companion; and a curious adventure of Breus sans pitie, in which he finds the bodies of Febus and the damsel of Northumberland in a house hewn in a rock; and learns their history from the son of Febus, a very old man, who in this habitation leads a life of penance with his son, which son is the father of Gyron, a fact of which Gyron is ignorant, he it appears being in the predicament of Prince Prettyman. Then comes an excellent adventure of the knight sans paour in the valley of Serfage, where Naban the black makes serfs of every person who enters: the reader is referred for the sequel to the Romance of Meliadus. Danayn in his turn delivers Gyron and his damsel, who had been betrayed, and were tied to a tree that they might suffer from the severity of the weather in the cold country of Sorolois. These knights are now reconciled; they separate, each seeking adventures, both are made prisoners; and we are referred to the history of Meliadus for their release, 'the Latin book from which this was translated saying no farther.' The Romance ends with a chapter in which Galineus the white, son of Gyron and the Damsel, who was born in the preceding chapter, defeats the best knights of the Round Table one after another; but he is a wicked knight himself, having been wickedly brought up by the false traitor who imprisoned his father.

"Francis the first of France preferred this to all other books of chivalry, and for that reason commanded Luigi Alamanni to versify it in Italian; the command was repeated by his successor Henry II; but Alamanni added little to his reputation by the poem; the easy sweetness of his verse is less delightful than the simplicity and strength of the old prose. The poet has justly praised the morality of his story; I know no other Romance so completely free from all impurities of thought or language; there are indications enough in it of an immoral age, but it seems as if the writer had escaped the contagion."

These Arabian Nights are translated from Wieland's *Wintermärchen*, a German constellation of Tales, first published by him in 1776. The original prologue, which introduces Sheherezade as the narratress, has been suppressed, because it seemed to interfere with the integrity of the poem, which may conveniently be separated into five segments:

1. The Fisherman and the Genius.
2. The Fishes and the Sultan.
3. The Sultan's Pilgrimage.
4. The King of the Black Isles.
5. The Asses Head.

THE FISHERMAN AND THE GENIUS.

A fisherman, in days of yore,
Was lingering weary on the shore
Of Malabar; his hair so gray,
And wetted with the salt sea-spray,
Wav'd in the chilly morning-air.
He stood, and gaz'd with gloomy glance
Upon the billows' idle dance,
And sighing brush'd his brows askance,
And wrung his wither'd hands for care.
"Thus to toil on with all my might
In wet and cold the live-long night,
And, now the sky is getting bright,
Not to have caught a single fin.—
My four poor children, and my wife,
Are waiting for the staff of life;
Ere this their hungry bellies yearn:
If empty-handed I return,
'T will make my heart grow sick within.
Four children—not a bit of bread—
Allah, take pity on my head;
Thy blessing on this hawl bê sent!
With little I can be content."

Once more he rows his narrow bound,
And flings the circling net around,
Then lands, and draws the ends aground,
Plies his alternate handiworks,
Watches the lessening ring of corks,
And feels, with palpitating joy,
His is not now a vain employ:
He pulls against some weighty burden.
"Thank God! I now shall have my guerdon;
My luck is turn'd, my chance is coming;
How my poor brats, and my good woman,
Will jump for joy, and laugh, and cry,
That father's load is of good omen."
So thought he, looking thankfully
Up to the dawn-embellish'd sky.

Hope's blushes are but transient glows;
Soon were to follow ohs, and woes;
When he has slowly dragg'd his treasure
Upon the pebbly beach,
He only finds in sad displeasure
Within his reach,
O'ergrown with sea-weed, slime, and shells,
An asses skull, and nothing else.

The old man's arms, and spirits, sink.
Standing beside the ocean-brink,
He stares in silent fury round
Now on the skeleton aground,
Now on his net, so tatter'd, broke,
Now casts to heaven a bitter look.
The mournful murmurs of the wave,
The mournful gusts athwart the cave,
Seem to repeat each heavy groan.
"Why stand you here in hopeless moan?
(So comes a thought across his soul,)
Plunge in; and that will end the whole."

Just then the earliest sun-beams glow'd,
And clad in glory every cloud,

He feels the all-enlivening day
Shoot through his frame a cheering ray;
Like melting mists his sorrows fly;
And faith and hope again are nigh.
For the third time, with moil and sweat,
He rinses, spreads, and hawls his net.

"'T is heavier now sure than before."
With pain he tugs it to the shore,
Lands the last loop, pries anxiously,
Finds he has caught no fish to fry,
Though he discovers in the place
A rusty, brazen, oval vase.
To lift it asks a sturdy hand.
"A treasure, on my life, a treasure!"
He cries, and drops for very pleasure
His ponderous burden on the sand.
"Should there be nought within the rand,"
Thinks he, "I 'll take it to the brazier,
'T will fetch at least wherewith to keep
My little ones a week from famine."
He kneels beside it to examine,
Finds on the rim, indented deep,
A spacious hieroglyphic seal,
Whose hidden meaning to reveal
Might puzzle a Benares bramin.
This, without crushing, he removes,
The lifted lid aside he shoves,
Looks, reaches in—with such strange gear
To seal up nothing, he thinks queer.

Slowly a dingy smoak unrolls
Out of the vessel's hollow womb,
Steeping the land and sea in gloom,
Wider and wider seems to creep,
And cowers a mountain o'er the deep.
The billows swell, the storm-wind howls,
Quench'd is the sun, pale lightnings sweep
The skies, and hollow thunder growls.

The fisherman, with fear aghast,
Stands, like a statue, rooted fast.

A deadly stillness follows now.
The billowing mist heaves to and fro,
Thickens, contracts, above, below,
Conglomerates, dimly gathers shape,
And, through the grayer robe of cloud,
Which falls aright, aleft, around,
In many a sweeping dusky fold,
A formidable spirit show'd
His monstrous limbs of giant mold.
Beneath his footstep flames escape,
And quakes and rocks the solid ground.

The fisherman, with fear unmann'd,
Begins to think of his last hour;
Totter his knees, he sinks before
The presence of a higher power,
And tumbles prostrate on the shore.
The Genius caught him by the hand;
'T was like a drop of comfort to him,
And shoots new life and courage through him,
His heart grows warm, his hopes expand.

The spirit said with gentle voice;
" You are my saviour. Know my name
Is Eblis. You have freed my frame,
And once again the' Immortal lives,
And in his being can rejoice.
No less than seven thousand Divs
Obeyed me always as their master,
Until that hour of dark disaster,
When Solomon, not overcame,
The will not e'en a god can tame;
For while his spell-girt hand confin'd me
Within this cursed caldron's brim,
Bent for a thousand years to bind me,
Defiance strain'd each struggling limb,
He felt I yielded not to him.

"Still to uplift this charmed lid,
Closed by the all-might of his seal,
The strongest spirit is forbid;
Whose spurn might crush a world to dust,
Or bid the planets backward wheel,
This seal alone—respect he must.
While you, weak child of flesh and blood,
Have lifted it, or, by your hand,
That Destiny, which none withstand.
But 't is all one. I mean your good.
Your date of sorrow too is spent.
You 've had hard measure in your prime,
And not enjoy'd the goods of time;
Come, follow me, your fates relent."

The fisherman, perplex'd full sore,
And wondering ever more and more,
Lets his conducter stalk before,
Up hill, down hill, o'er rock and rill,
Through bush and rush, through wood and moor,
Through thick and thin, through field and heath,
He tramps, scarse venturing to fetch breath,
And doubting if he 's broad awake.
The march was silent, long and dreary;
And the old man grew rather weary,
When he and Eblis reach'd a lake,
Amid a desert valley spread,
Smooth as a mirror, bright and clear
As the blue heavens overhead,
With woody hills on all sides near.

The startled fisherman stood still.
"I ought, methinks, to know each station,
That 's hereabouts in reputation;
I 've fished in every pool and rill:
And yet I never saw this water.
I hope it is not conjuration,
By means of which it has been brought here."

The spirit read his every thought,
As were it written on his brow:
But only said: "Observe me now;
Once every morning, if you wish,
You may provide yourself with fish
In this lone lake; but oftener not:
Remember well the road, the spot."

So with a voice of thunder spake
The spirit-king, and vanish'd strait.
Long trembled both the land and lake;
And, from the many hills around,
Like waters, that with headlong weight
From rock to rock rebound and break,
Was echoed back the awful sound.

"Is this a dream?" the old man cries,
Rubbing his forehead for surprize,
"Does the seraub[1] but entertain
With mimic waves my cheated brain?
No: 't is a lake; and deep, and clear,
And full of fish. How brisk they play,
And swarm, and scriggle every where!
How fine they seem! Troth, they are able,
Presented in a golden tray,
To decorate a sultan's table.
I 'll try my luck." With glee he spread
A casting net beside his head,
Gave it a full-orb'd fling, pulls in, and finds
Four noble fish of sundry kinds.
"Enough for once," quoth he, bereaves
The willows of some twigs and leaves,
Packs up his severalities,
And to the tower'd metropolis,

[1] *Seraub.* The seraub, or mirage, is thus described in Morier's *Persia*, vol. i, p. 193. "The greatest part of the plain is of a soil strongly impregnated with salt; and, as in every other district of the same quality, we witnessed the curious effects of the vapor called ser-aub, which overspread the plain, giving it the appearance of a pool of standing water."

Rich as an emir in conceit,
Returns with wings upon his feet.

What most of all delights his view
Is the strange fishes' motley hue.
Of the four captives in his trammel
The one is yellow, t' other red,
Silver a third, a fourth is blue,
Each all alike from tail to head,
Yet bright and sparkling as enamel.
"If dealings there have been undue—
But mush! our withers are unwrung,
Use the good luck, and hold our tongue."

The fisherman, a little harass'd
With all these unexpected sallies,
And eager to be disembarass'd,
Was glad to reach the city-gate,
And hasten'd to the sultan's palace,
Who in divan, at hour of noon,
Sat pondering—smoaking a kaleoon.[2]
When the divan broke up its state,
The fisherman sent in his present.
The sultan, like a man of mind,
Made light of it, yet inly smil'd,
Counts on his dinner, like a child,
And felt his temper vastly pleasant.
"The fish be to the cook consign'd,

2 *Kaleoon.* The water-pipe, or smoaking apparatus of the orientals, is called a kaleoon. Although the herb tobacco, which is said to have been first brought from America by Sir Walter Raleigh, has now by universal consent obtained the preference as the material of inhalation; yet some other form of smoaking, hemp-leaves perhaps, was in use among the ancients; for Athenæus, in his first book, quotes from the Greek comic poet Crobylus these words:

Καὶ τὸν λάρυγγ' ἥδιστα πυρῖῳ τεμαχίοις·
Κάμινος οὐκ ἄνθρωπος.

And I will sweetly burn my throat with cuttings—
A chimney, not a man.

Now, as in the preceding line, the smoaker boasts of his Idæan fingers, it is plain, that every one rolled up his sharoot for himself.

With hints to do them proper honor;
And, tell my treasurer, I please
To issue for the loyal donor
A purse of forty gold roopees."

A purse of forty gold roopees
For the poor naked fisherman!
Guess if he trotted home at ease.
There let us leave the good old man,
Surrounded by his household clan,
Counting his monies one by one,
Holding them up before the sun,
Telling his wife the wondrous story,
Which she has no desire to shorten.
"The spirit, troth, has kept his word;
This is for me a day of glory:
If every morning this occurr'd,
But for a week, 't would make my fortune."

THE FISHES AND THE SULTAN.

What past at court be next our bent;
Where, as the chronicle avers,
The grand vizier, whose foresight went
As far as most prime ministers',
Was wisely versed in kitchen matters,
And the philosophy of platters,
And, well convinc'd, that, in a state,
The stomach is the real gate
To favor with the high and great.
Accordingly his way was clear.
With his own gracious hands he took
The fishes to the master-cook,
And, though he thought them rather dear,
Urg'd him to spare nor cost, nor pains,
But to develop all his brains,
In making them quite palateable,
And worthy of the sultan's table.

The' obedient cook lost not a minute;
He scales, embowels, trims the fishes,
Calls for a saucepan of red wine,
Washes them out and inside in it,
Minces the mingled farce-meat fine,
Rubs in the spices, warms the dishes;
In short fulfils the sacred rites
Of kitchen-worship, as behights
A priest of Comus in renown.
Scarse were the fishes nicely brown,
When he, with fork in hand, began
To turn them in the frying pan.

At once a maiming shudder thrills
Through every limb, and stays his arm
Spell-bound by some mysterious charm.
A radiance, as of sunshine, fills
The dingy vault; and from the wall,
Which silently was cleft asunder,
Forth stept a lady stately, tall,
For beauty quite a dazzling wonder,
As were she of the Perie race;
Power in her eye, her movement grace.
A garment of white satin stroll'd
About her hips in many a fold,
And at the bosom was control'd
By diamond clasps. Beside her face
Light-yellow curling tresses play,
And shade a neck, which to embrace
Some kings would give whole towns away.
The coil of pearls, that on it lay,
Against her snowy skin seem'd gray.
Her arms so taper, plump and round,
Were each with ruby bracelets bound.

The cook look'd up in fixt amaze,
Wishing he had a hundred eyes
To bask in such a beauteous gaze.
The lady heeds not his surprize;

But solemnly approach'd the pan,
Thrice with a sprig of myrtle smote
The quiet fishes, and began:
"Fishes are you
To duty true?"
The fishes utter'd not a note.
A second time the lady said:
"Fishes are you
To duty true?"
The fishes did not lift a head.
For the third time the lady spoke:
"Fishes are you
To duty true?"
And now the fish began to croak,
And rais'd their heads, and sang amain,
In choral notes, this mystic strain:
"Fishes, fleshes, insects, birds,
Alike obey allmighty words.
Moslem, Christian, Giaour, Jew,
Are all alike to duty true.
We spend the day in ceaseless moil,
And fare but poorly for our toil.
We faithfully come forth to reckon,
When you and yours are pleas'd to beckon.
We pay your debts as well as ours,
Nor murmur at the higher powers.
We hope, and wish, and pray, and prate,
But cannot guess the will of fate."
Now the four fish gave o'er their hum,
And bow'd their heads, as stricken dumb:
The lady overturn'd the pan;
And through the wall, whence she had come,
She disappear'd again.

The cook stood petrified, aghast,
Scarsely believing what had past;
And hesitates if to aspire
To save the fishes from the fire:
And when, with his long fork, he caught 'em,

Lo! they were charcoal top and bottom.
Now the poor fellow, frighten'd sore,
Ran up and down the kitchen stair,
Tore out whole handfuls of his hair,
And, in his terrible despair,
Howl'd like a madman, stamp'd and swore:
"What can I say to gain belief?
No lion rages like our chief:
With sultans 't is in vain to reason:
He 'll hang me by the neck for treason."

Mean while appears the grand vizier
To take the fishes up to table;
And only finds, O lamentable!
Charcoal, instead of dainty cheer.
The cook fell prostrate at his view,
And told him all the wondrous scene,
With such an honest air and mien,
An atheist would have felt 't was true.
"I read the fact, friend, in your face,"
Says the vizier; "but to the sultan
I dare not certify the case:
He 'll think me hoaxing and insulting:
Strange things no doubt may come to be;
But to believe them one must see.
I 'll smooth him down with idle gear,
From which he 'll turn his head away,
Or listen with but half an ear;
He 'll hardly care to own much sorrow:
And if he gets his fish to-morrow,
We 'll make him easy for to-day."

The fisherman receives a warning,
And under pain of high displeasure,
To bring, at breakfast time next morning,
Four fishes of the former measure.
The old man flinches in his hide:
"What if the place cannot be found—
Who takes a spirit for his guide

Not always walks on solid ground."
So thought he, yet, by day-break bolder,
He hoists his net upon his shoulder,
Tramps the strange road he took before,
Up hill, down hill, o'er rock and rill,
Through bush and thicket, wood and moor.
He finds again the lonely lake;
Again four fish his trammels take;
One red, one yellow, 't other blue,
The fourth of glistening silver hue.
He bears them home, obtains for fees
Another forty gold roopees;
And leaves contentedly his seizure
In keeping of the cook and vizier.

His excellency, bent to look
On all with scrutinizing eye,
Shut himself up with the chief cook,
Who felt the honor sensibly,
And did his utmost to display
More genius still than yesterday,
Hoping to earn a high renown.
When on one side the fish were brown,
The cook, with fork in hand, began
To turn them in the frying pan.

At once a flash of brightness tore
The dingy vault, and from the wall
Forth stept the lady as before,
So beautiful, majestic, tall,
In her white satin garment drest,
With clasps of diamond at the breast,
On either wrist a ruby band,
And holding in her small white hand
With graceful state a myrtle wand.
She solemnly approach'd the pan,
Thrice with her verdant sceptre prest
The conscious fishes, and began:
"Fishes, are you
To duty true?"

And, when for the third time she spoke,
The fishes all began to croak,
And rais'd their heads and sang amain
In choral notes their mystic strain:
"Fishes, fleshes, insects, birds,
Alike obey allmighty words.
Moslem, Christian, Giaour, Jew,
Are all alike to duty true.
We spend the day in ceaseless moil,
And fare but poorly for our toil.
We faithfully come forth to reckon,
When you and yours are pleas'd to beckon.
We pay your debts, as well as ours,
Nor murmur at the higher powers.
We hope, and wish, and pray, and prate,
But cannot guess the will of fate."
And now the fish gave o'er their hum,
And bow'd their heads, as stricken dumb;
The lady overturn'd the pan;
And through the wall, whence she had come,
She disappear'd again.

"By all my beard! this is too bad,"
Quoth the vizier, "for who can own
He witness'd incidents like those
And pass for one not crack'd at crown?
Sure 't is enough to drive one mad,
Not to be able to expose
What happens underneath one's nose.
Seeing with one's own eyes is seeing;
And if Philosophy in person,
With all her consequential airs on,
Came dogmatizing, disagreeing,
Proving I neither saw nor heard:
With a good kick I 'd send her packing,
And not allow another word.
And yet the sultan will be lacking
Belief in what we must declare.
Nor can I blame him to beware:

It sounds so like a fever-dream.
Still, whatsoever he may deem,
Our testimonies must agree;
So let him come himself, and see."

The sultan listen'd with due patience
To both their wonderful narrations,
Now brush'd his whiskers, frownc'd his brow,
Or shook his head, or utter'd "How?"
And, when the story was concluded,
Said: "I 'll believe it when I 've view'd it."

The fisherman is bid once more
His reservoirs to explore:
Who begg'd, as 't was some length of way,
For four and twenty hours delay.
He left the town, ere break of day,
Took the same road he trudg'd before,
Up hill, down hill, o'er rock and rill,
Through bush and thicket, wood and moor,
And finds with joy the lonely lake
Still in its place. His trammels take
Again four fish of several hue,
Red, yellow, silver-gray, and blue.
"This Eblis," thought he, "has some feeling;
I hardly hop'd such honest dealing."
His prize brought home, he earns with ease
Another forty gold roopees;
And thinks the hundred coins and twenty
Have stationed him in lasting plenty.

The sultan, not without some awe,
Handles the fishes, back and belly,
Admires their glistening scales so shelly,
Examines head, tail, fin, mouth, maw,
Tries if they will not speak—in vain;
And, after all his care and pain,
Only discovers they are fish:
But, troubled with an anxious wish

To know what further would betide,
Shuts himself up with the vizier,
The fishes, and the cooking gear,
And bolts the door on the inside;
Lets fire be kindled by his guide,
Watches in turn the pan, the wall,
Those stepping-stones of the strange story,
Professing, for his safer glory,
Not to believe a word of all.

The grand vizier, long wont to think
Obedience to his master's wink
His highest duty, highest joy,
Makes ready for his new employ;
Binds a white apron round his waist,
Is soon before the dresser plac'd,
Picks each utensil to his wish,
Scales, and embowels all the fish;
Washes them thoroughly in wine,
Minces the spicy farce-meat fine,
And dipt in egg, and dredg'd with flour,
Lays in due order all the four,
As if he really hop'd to dine.
He piles and stirs the fire anon,
Brightens the charcoal with a fan,
Pours oil into the frying pan,
Puts in the fish, and sets it on.
The sultan, pleas'd to apprehend
Such novel talents in his friend,
Exclaims: "Indeed the men that tell
Are those who can do all things well."

The fish were nicely brown'd erelong
On the one side, and, with a prong
Of gold, the vizier turn'd them over.
Again the wall asunder tore:
Stead of the lady, they discover
Fierce stalking forth a giant Moor:
A fiery coloured garb he wore,

And angrily approach'd the pan,
Rais'd the green branchlet in his hand,
Thrice smote the fishes with the wand,
And in a thundering voice began:
"Fishes are you
To duty true?"
The fish were more alert a deal;
They did not wait his third appeal,
Perhaps because this ruffian Moor
Had boxed their ears unceremoniously.
They lifted up their heads once more,
And sang with open mouths harmoniously,
The very words, which twice before
They said by heart so unerroneously;
Then felt their closing lips in ban.
The negro overturn'd the pan,
Flung the four fishes on the earth,
Black as the charcoal in the hearth,
And, having satisfied his gall,
He vanish'd through the closing wall.

"Did I not tell your highness so?"
Says the vizier; "except the Moor,
'T is the same vision as before.
I own, I should prefer to show
The lovely lady, and her curls,
In her white satin, and her pearls;
But at the last 't is all the same:
Both disappear just whence they came."

The sultan answer'd: "What we see
Seems beyond possibility;
And robs me of repose of mind.
The cause of this I will outfind;
And, till I bring it to the proof,
I 'll sleep no more beneath this roof."

The fisherman is straitway sent for.
"Those fish you brought us yesterday

Don't seem to be what they were meant for:
Whence do you get them, fellow, say?"

"Out of a lake," the' old man replied,
"Spreading along yon mountain-side,
Which from the window you discern;
On horse-back 't is not an hour's ride."

"I know the country ten miles round,
Resum'd the sultan, wood and fern,
Village and waste, hill, swamp, and brake;
I 've hunted over it many a year,
And travers'd every rod of ground:
Yet I can recollect no lake.
Do you remember one, vizier?"

"I never heard, before to-day,
That there was any lake so near."

"We 'll go there, and without delay.
You, fisherman, must be our pilot.
Put all my people in array.
The court is free to join my way;
So pitch our tents there before twilight."

THE SULTAN'S PILGRIMAGE.

Scarse was the sultan's plan recounted,
The court is booted, spurr'd, and mounted,
And issues forth in full parade;
With well-coil'd turbans, snowy white,
Each with a damask sabre dight,
A stately glittering cavalcade.

To the main street thick crouds resort,
Forgo their work, their meals, their sport,
And wonder what can be the matter;

And why a fishman leads the troop,
Whose awkward riding mars the groop;
Dispute, and guess, and gaze, and chatter,
And are no wiser for their smatter.

Not far the throngs on foot pursue
The fleeter horse, soon lost to view
In clouds of dust, and winding vallies.
The fisherman before them sallies
Up hill, down hill, o'er rock and rill,
Through bush and thicket, wood and moor,
And brings them down the mountain-side,
Where spread a lake its waters wide,
Which no one had observ'd before.

When they drew near, and saw below
The fishes in the wavelets play,
Blue, yellow, red, and silver-gray,
They fancied they were looking through
Some magic glasses at a show;
And with one voice exclaim'd, " 'T is clear
Our senses can't be trusted here."
The sultan took a solemn vow
In the untrodden vale to pause,
Were it to cost a year or more,
Till he had ascertain'd the cause
Of the strange wonders of the shore.

Pavilions they unfurl, and stake
Along the margin of the lake.
High in the middle of the mead
A kitchen rears its smoaky head;
For the vizier, who shunn'd no trouble,
And whose capacious soul foresaw
The universal wants and wishes
Would centre soon on savoury dishes,
Made due provision for the maw;
Being often wont to quote this saw:
To empty stomachs ills are double.

Two hours before the morrow's dawn,
While scattered on the tented lawn
The sprawling court lay buried deep
In fumes of wine, and dreams of sleep,
The sultan summon'd his vizier
And said: "I want your private ear:
No contradiction I beseech:
To shake me is beyond your reach.
I 'am bent these wonders to explore,
Whether it cost me less, or more,
Of time, of toil, of thought, of wealth,
I 'll stake upon 't my strength, my health.
Farewell for better or for worse.

"If in seven days I am not before you,
'T is easy to invent some story
To pacify the questioners.—
I 've a stiff neck, or tooth or gum ache,
Colic, or gout, or cramp of stomach.
Govern meanwhile the usual way:
Do only what you must to-day;
Leave till to-morrow all you may;
And trust futurity to God."

After this very sage adieu,
Uprose the sultan arm'd and shod,
Whisper'd his prayer, and stalk'd abroad,
Wandering, till day-break met his view,
Along the silent lonely coast,
His mind in strange forebodings lost,
Yet fixed, intrepid, proud, and fierce.

Mournful and still, as sepulchres,
Lay hill, and dale, and wood, and lake,
E'en the free airs their death partake.
Empty and desolate they lay,
As erst before creation-day.

Two hours the sultan had been straying,
When from the east horizon first

The gleams of early sunshine burst,
In their own sudden blaze arraying
A castle of bright polished steel,
The woods seemed planted to conceal.

When, in this scene of desolation,
The wanderer first perceived the station
Of a vast palace, tall, and stately,
And bright as crystal, full of glee
He said to himself: "We soon shall see,
So Allah pleases, what 's the meaning
Of the strange facts befallen lately,
Which for three days were so chagreening—
The lake, which none had seen before,
The fish, red, yellow, blue, and gray,
The lovely lady, and the Moor,
Who through the walling made their way,
And what the fish to duty true,
Sang in the pan, when broil'd half through,
The purport of all this, I feel,
Lies hidden in yon hall of steel."

Urged by such hopes he mends his pace;
The nearer the enchanted place,
The more his Highness feels a qualm,
A something sticking in his throat;
Still he proceeds, attains the entry,
Where neither man, nor beast, stood sentry,
Ascends the drawbridge, crost a moat,
Whose waters slept in weedy calm;
But not without, and not within,
Heard he of life the voice, or din.
In court and kitchen, bower and hall,
'T is loneliness, and silence, all,
As were it but a home of tombs.
Nor slave, nor damsel, pace the rooms,
No cat jumps up, no spaniel comes,
No mouse sneaks by, no blue fly hums,
No sparrow chirps, no spider weaves,
Nor swallow nestles 'neath the eaves.

The longer time the sultan ponders,
The greater awe inspire the wonders.
He passes on, and every way
Apartments royal pomp display;
Long galleries intersect the building;
The walls and cielings gleam with gilding;
Rich curtains veil the cedar doors;
Gay carpets deck the marble floors;
The furniture with broidery glistens,
But every where a deep repose.
The sultan steals about, and listens,
Prying, downstairs, upstairs, he goes,
Stops at least seven times to bawl,
In vain: from passage, arch, and hall,
Only' echoes answer to his call,
Mocking each other's dying fall.

When he had well explor'd the mansion,
Admir'd its intricate expansion,
And redescended to the soil;
The loveliest garden met his view,
Which fairy fingers could bedew.
The airs in fragrant billows coil,
The walks with little pearls are strown,
Flowers of all months the borders crown,
The myrtle-grove's mysterious shade,
The roseate bower, the turfy glade,
Delighted him, where'er he stray'd.
Trees bending fruitage o'er the paths,
White marble fountains, grotto-baths,
Arbours for slumber—all in short
Was there to tempt the saunterer's stay,
A god might make it his resort.
One only thing undid the whole,
Undwelt, unvisited it lay,
A paradise without a soul.

The wood is silent as a ruin,
No turtle-dove is heard there cooing,
No climbing sky-lark sings in air,

No butterfly quaffs odor there,
O'er flowrets trails no speckled snake,
No lizard wriggles through the brake,
No green frog leaps along the bank,
No fishlet ripples in the tank;
What lives, what mimics life to sight
Was from this garden banish'd quite.

Bewilder'd in his contemplations,
The sultan wanders to and fro;
"As yet," thinks he, "my cogitations
Have not decypher'd this dumb show;
And still each step of my intrusion
Persuades me firmly, more and more,
That all this scene is but illusion,
That divs and spirits hover o'er,
Mock me, and, as I shrewdly dread,
Reserve for me an asses head."
A laugh of sprites unseen was heard
To hail in air the ominous word.

The sultan's patient steps prest hard on
The utmost limits of the garden,
When first a murmur caught his ear,
As of a man who groan'd in pain,
And felt his hour of fate was near.
Quicker he marches toward the strain.

Out of a spacious oval pool,
Which blocks of blackish marble bound,
By fountains fed with waters cool,
And girt with leafy lindens round,
Arose a dome of sable stone,
Whence seem'd to steal the' unceasing moan.

The sultan, ever kind and brave,
Felt anxious to behold and save.
The tones kept sensibly enlarging
The nearer to the water's margin.

And there he found a small canoe,
Fast to the brink with golden clue,
Loosen'd it, ferried himself o'er,
Assisted by a single oar,
Landed on granite steps, ascended,
And, through a half-way open door,
Into the house of woe he trended.

Lo there he stands! Where shall I borrow
Words tokening his surprize and sorrow?
High from aloof the pale light plunging,
As through the cranny of a dungeon,
Serv'd but to show, beneath its roam,
The awful darkness of the dome,
Which overcanopied a throne
Enrich'd with gems, that vainly shone.
The shadow of a monarch's son
Alive, unmoving, sat thereon.
A scarlet mantle wrapt him round.
A diadem his forehead bound.
Big drops his downcast eyes bedew.
Thin was his form, and pale of hue,
As had he, for a course of years,
Fed only upon grief and tears.

Bent on the secret of the case,
With help and pity in his face,
The sultan now approach'd, and said:
"Excuse me, whosoe'er you be,
Whose moanings seem to reach but me,
And tell me why these tears are shed.
There 's nothing I would shun, or dread,
To set you from your sufferings free."

As had the lightning touched his frame,
The startled king began to exclaim:
"What voice dares warble hope to me?
What heavenly vision do I see?
Can mortal footstep here have trod?
Deceive me not: art thou a god?"

The sultan, with this question struck,
Drew back, observ'd with steady look
The princely youth, and calmly spake:
"A humble mortal man draws nigh,
Like you the slave of destiny:
But for your service he would wield
Whatever Vizapoor can yield."

"You are truly kind and good," replied,
Sighing, and in a feeble tone,
The living shadow on the throne,
"Relief to me must be denied.
Always alas! in vain I pine;
So strange, so singular, my woe,
I firmly think that here below
No other sorrow equals mine:
In all I feel of sufferers first,
In all I feel not, more accurst."

The sultan thought within himself:
He must be fond of pretty phrases,
Who lays his sorrows on the shelf
To sport with antithetic graces.
But when the other, from his breast
And back, withdrew the scarlet vest,
God! what a scene of ruthless rigor,
What a sad Ecce Homo figure
Stood to the aching view confest.
His body, to the hips unveil'd,
By scourges had been torn and wal'd,
As had a thousand vipers met,
And with their venom fangs assail'd:
The quivering flesh was bleeding yet.
The sight, e'en in the hellish deep,
Had melted angry fiends to weep.
Shuddering awhile the sultan stands,
Covers his eyes with both his hands,
And cries: "Heaven, can thy thunders sleep?"

A pause ensuing long and deep,
The young man broke the silence first:
"As yet you have not seen the worst."
And now he lifted from his groins
The mantle wrapt about his loins;
"See where my other woes are seated,
Thus have I been by love ill-treated."
With eye-balls swimming in their tears,
The leaning sultan looks, and hears,
Handles the limbs with flinching shock:
"How strange, transform'd to stone below!
Into black marble stone, I vow,
Cold, hard, inflexible as rock,
Thy judgements, Lord, on all alight!
What are we mortals in thy sight?
For might not this have chanc'd to me,
As well as to the wretch I see?
However, when one knows the worst,
No further sorrow waits to burst.
Take courage, prince, 't is passing clear
Divs, magic, have been busy here.
But the last drop of blood I owe,
I 'll stake to rid you of your woe,
Or perish with you on the throw."

His hands enfolded solemnly,
With tear-drops glistening in his eye,
The marble-prince said thankfully:
"You see it is no fault of mine,
If I arise not from my seat,
To clasp your knees, to kiss your feet,
To worship you, as I incline."

And now a confidential vein
Of talk came on—the sultan fain
To tell the story of the fishes,
And how the marvels in their history
Had filled his inmost soul with wishes
To penetrate the mighty mystery,

And led him on this spot to travel
Hoping the secret to unravel.
"And I suspect," he interjected,
"That all these matters are connected
With your extraordinary fate.
I 'm more than curious, and aspire
To be of use, when I inquire
How came you into this sad state?"

THE KING OF THE BLACK ISLES.

The youth now motion'd to his guest
Upon the sofa to repose,
Sigh'd from the bottom of his breast,
And thus began his tale of woes.

"What always tempted us to riot,
What always was the bane of quiet,
And has occasion'd every woe
A god has doom'd us to below?
The lovely plague, the welcome curse,
Shame, glory, of the universe,
The' eternal idol of desire,
The' eternal devil nurst in fire,
The snake of snakes, whose magic noose
We ask, yet strive not, to unloose,
In short that heaven and hell conjoin'd,
Of five unhallow'd letters coin'd,
Woman, the flower-strown road to ruin,
Has been the cause of my undoing.

"I am that Uzim, not unfear'd,
Whose corsair fleets bore vexing war
Up to the shores of Malabar,
Till hostile magic interfer'd
And the' iland-empire disappear'd.

" When first I saw the light of day,
Three Peries, friendly to my mother,
Perch'd round the cradle, where I lay,
Their hands entwin'd in one another,
And sang in hovering dance a lay,
Which prophesied, she said, to me,
Affection, patience, constancy.
Who in these gifts would have foreseen
Dire disappointment, endless teen?
That 't was to be my lot to grieve
From golden morn to jewell'd eve;
To the deaf heavens aloud complain,
And spend my ceaseless moan in vain.

" Of the black ilands I was king:
Chang'd to four hills, e'en now they cling
Around this lake, whose watery beat
Was once the town, my royal seat.

" Scarse was I mounted on my throne,
When I resolv'd to take a wife,
(My sins so destin'd to atone,)
The fairest woman seen in life,
A figure, as my passion thought,
By Love's own plastic fingers wrought.

" How happily my days sped on!
How gilt with sunbeams all things shone!
So mightily the enchantress knew
My inmost being to subdue.
Delighted in her gaze to rest,
Imparadis'd upon her breast,
My soul was steep'd in floods of bliss,
Joy was her smile, and heaven her kiss.
Five years roll'd on, which seem'd to me
Five single days of extasy.

" Who thinks the dome of heaven will sever?
I lov'd, I thought myself belov'd,

And fancied this might last for ever.
Ah! why was the deceit remov'd?
Why to the happy one deny,
Ye gods, to feast on his illusion?
Why wake him but to misery,
And rouze him but to his confusion?
Fate so has will'd, can man gainsay?

" Once on a sultry summer's day,
The hottest day in all my life,
Dispos'd to slumber as I lay,
Stretch'd in the garden on a sofa,
Beneath the shade of a shenaar,
Conning from Hafiz a sweet strophe,
Two waiting damsels of my wife,
Who had observ'd me from afar,
Came, with wet fans of sandal wood,
To cool the airs that round me flow'd,
And whiff the buzzing flies away.
They knelt before me, thought me sleeping;
But I could hear their whispers creeping.
And still'd myself to catch their say.

" ' How handsome our young monarch is,'
Quoth one, ' I dare not steal a kiss,
Though my lips water—the sultana
With happy women must be reckon'd.'
' You don't know all,' replies the second,
' There 's many a care in a zenana.
Princes are not like other folks,
Smiles are with them but hatred's cloaks.
Who would suppose—so full of grace
As the king is—night after night
Another comes to take his place,
And riot in his wife's embrace!'
' How so? you put me in a fright.'
' She brings, at the retiring hour,
A golden cup of sparkling water,
From some far famous fountain brought her,

Of wondrous soporific power.
Good easy man, he little thinks
'T is more than water that he drinks,
And that till its effects are over,
She strays in safety with her lover.'

" While this was passing, how I felt
I know not, wish not to remark.
My solid being seem'd to melt
Into a chaos billowy, dark;
Earth, heaven, lay heavy on my breast.
Yet I had force enough to keep
This inward struggle, deadly pain,
From stranger-witnesses suppress;
To mimic deaf untroubled sleep;
And, when I woke, I left the twain
Unconscious they had fir'd my brain.

" But when I found myself alone,
I plung'd into the wood to groan.
All nature stood before me black.
My knees bent under me, I sank
Stunn'd, dizzy, on a stony bank,
And lay like one upon the rack.
Surely it cannot be, I said,
It were too foul, abominable!
May n't this designing woman fable?
If I survive the coming night,
I 'll watch what passes, and, till light,
Preserve what calmness I am able.

" It came too slow for me, the night.—
We ate alone. How fair to sight,
How bath'd in beauty's bloomy dies
She glow'd, how my devouring gaze
Caught and reflected back the rays
Of love, that darted from her eyes!
More innocent at every look
She seem'd, so sweetly voic'd she spoke,

Mistrust my soften'd soul forsook
So wholly, that, when at the close
To fetch the golden cup she rose,
My project had been half forgot.
However I fulfill'd my plot;
And, so that she did not suspect,
I took occasion to reject,
From the veranda-trellis brink,
The draught I had appear'd to drink;
Gave back to her the beaker smoothly,
And we retir'd at bed-time soothly.

" Scarse was the traitoress persuaded
That sleep my tranquil limbs invaded,
When she arose. The full moon shone,
And thwart the golden grating threw
Into the room its level rays,
On me she bent a prying gaze:
' Sleep on,' said she, with stifled tone,
' And may you never wake anew!'
Then with a ready hand she flung
A garment round her, and withdrew.

" No sooner was she out of hearing,
And not expos'd to take alarm,
Than from my restless couch I sprung,
As if by swarming wasps bestung,
And sallied forth, my anger steering,
A caftan round my shoulders slung,
A sabre underneath my arm,
To fathom whither she was veering.

" Caution and shame alike discarding,
The wings of love at both her soles,
She was already in the garden,
And far before me nimbly gliding.
I seem'd to tread on burning coals,
Stalking on tiptoe, near the hedges,
My quick but stealthy progress hiding
Behind the branchlets flowery edges.

" Often awhile she vanish'd: then
I caught a glimpse of her again,
According as her pathway winded,
Or clumps of trees, or fountains, blinded.
At length I wholly miss'd her sight,
Wonder'd in vain where she was got to,
Explor'd alcove, and bower, and grotto,
The roving form had ceas'd to glisten—
'T was plung'd into the shades of night.
I paus'd, intently still, to listen—
The nightingales gregariously
On wavering boughs in moonshine bask'd;
So sweetly, shrilly, variously,
They swell'd their moving notes unask'd,
Methought I could have wish'd to weep,
But grief lay on my soul too deep.

" Erelong, from flowery thickets near,
The queen's voice smote my thrilling ear.
I stole yet closer, to within
Some fifteen paces of the din—
When lo! beneath an almond tree,
On the ill-shaded grassy lea,
Guess, sultan, what I must behold—
My consort, sitting on the knee
Of the most ugly, frizzled, Moor,
The slime of Gambia ever bore,
Caressing him with cordial fold,
As if she triumph'd in her sin.
He kiss'd her cheeks so flower-soft skin,
Play'd with the streamlets of her hair,
Wanton'd about her bosom bare,
Clasp'd her slim waist with impious paw—
How she forgot herself I saw.

" No more could bear my giddy sight:
Vanish'd the moon with all her light,
Yet still athwart the boundless night,
For my worse torment louder rung
The enchanting siren's silver tongue.

" He had, it seems, presum'd to huff;
Complain'd she lov'd him not enough.

" 'Can you,' said she, and with a tone
To melt the marrow in one's bone,
'Mistrust a heart, whose inmost clue
Burns in perpetual love for you,
Sees only you on nature's chart,
Nor knows a joy from you apart,
Feels all its highest transports scant,
Till on your bosom it can pant.
In every fibre of my frame,
In every pulse, though flush'd by shame,
You still must feel, that you abide
Dearer to me than all beside.
Can you torment a heart so fond?
Affect misgivings, doubt, despond?
Tyrant! what yet remains to prove
The mad excess wherewith I love?
What wish can your caprices dream?—
That wish shall be my law supreme.
Say, shall this throng'd metropolis
In ruin sink before your eyes,
Become a pool where serpents hiss,
Its inmates lose their human guise,
Shall lightnings rive its stately piles,
Deluge o'erwhelm these clustering isles,
While you and I above the wreck,
With royal treasures at our beck,
Together on Imaus dwell?
Amid its rocks of pillar'd ice
For us shall bloom a paradise—
'T will not transcend my power of spell.'

" I could contain myself no longer;
I wanted so to cleave in twain
At once the swarthy monster's brain,
Who stole my lady's love from me.
Wrath made my sabred hand the stronger.

I burst upon them suddenly.
Her terror at my rash proceeding
Allow'd me time to deal the blow,
Which cleft his skull, and laid him low.
The traitor sank beside her bleeding,
Nor utter'd e'en a final groan.
'Fly,' said I then with wild impatience,
'Provoke no further indignations,
One victim shall for both atone.'

"A look she shot at me, so grim
That it unnerv'd my every limb.
Then flung herself with clinging care
Along her leman's bloody lair:
Shriek'd, howl'd, and bellow'd, till her wail
Was echoed back by hill and dale.
Now on his senseless corse she prest,
Veil'd his dead visage in her breast,
Washt it with streams of tears, bemoaning,
Laid it against her heart, deep-groaning,
Call'd to his coy unhearing frame
By every tender fondling name
The lips of love delight to mould,
And when she found him dumb and cold,
She storm'd amid her silken hair,
Tore her long locks in wild despair,
Scratch'd, wounded, rent her cheeks, her breast,
Then, fixt in staring horrid rest,
She swore a dæmon-oath aloud
(The startled moon shrunk back in cloud)
To satiate fully her revenge,
To torture without ruth, or change,
The robber of so dear a life,
Who curst her with the name of wife.

"All this had I to hear, and see,
But could not from my station flee.
Spell-bound I stood, as if congeal'd,
Unable hand, or foot, to wield.

'Remove him from before my eyes,'
To her attendant imps she cries,
'And guard him, safe as in the tomb,
Until I shall pronounce his doom.'

"And now I felt myself upborne
By viewless hands, and cast forlorn
Into a jail, bereav'd of light,
To sigh away the rest of night.
Could wishes end this mortal strife,
I had depriv'd myself of life.

"Dragg'd the next morning from my prison,
Like an unsentenc'd ghost new risen,
I met her presence, and beheld
Her form in deepest mourning veil'd.
'T was like a poignard to my breast!
Although 't was justice to detest;
Her loveliness was so amazing,
I could not help with transport gazing;
So beautiful, so touching, she
Seem'd, in her settled grief, to me.

"But in her flashing eye-balls roll'd
The wrath of vengeance uncontroll'd.
A flaming redness flush'd her cheek.
'And art thou dead?' (she 'gan to speak,
Turning her head to where he lay)
'From me for ever torn away?—
And, where I bury all my joys,
Shall any living thing rejoice,
Rejoice, beloved, near thy grave,
My sorrows there bemock, and brave?
No: round about shall only reign
Dumb desolation, pining pain.
And you, to whom these pangs I owe,
Curst author of my endless woe,
I 'll not annihilate your being—
Stay by this spot, unseen but seeing,

Live on in torments to complain,
To ask with tears for death in vain,
And not that best of gifts obtain.'

" While thus the vengeful sorceress spoke,
Casting on me a withering look,
Thrice with her magic wand she strook
The quaking earth. A lurid light
Dimmens the day with hues of fright:
Long thunders through the skies resound:
Flames billow from the rifted ground.
Her arms afloat, with bristling hair,
She now began to whirl around
In giddy dance, with haggard stare,
And mutter'd to the eddying air,
While fiendish forms beside her glare.

" I felt her might. Against the spell
In vain my stiffening limbs rebel;
All my bewilder'd senses quell.
But, when my consciousness return'd,
I saw her not. Too soon I learn'd
How wide, how deep, her vengeance burn'd.
I found but half myself again;
Found desolation spread amain;
Found my metropolis no more,
For whose good will so lately sped
The freighted ships from every shore;
But a still lake outstretch'd in stead;
And all its inmates at a blow,
Though countless as the flakes of snow,
To fishes chang'd of sundry hue;
The Moslems gray, the Christians blue,
Yellow the Jews, the Giaours red;
All sunk in one oblivious stream.
From prospering glory what a fall!
Like the frail fabric of a dream,
In a few hours had vanish'd all.

"This scene of sorrow still was not
The bitterest portion of my lot;
For worse than death awaited me
In this sepulchral prisonry;
Where, helpless and alone, so long
I 've undergone my painful wrong,
That memory reaches not to show
The number of my days of woe.
Each morning (can such fury fell
Within so soft a bosom dwell?)
She comes to me, in ruthless mood,
And lashes all my back to blood;
Until her weary arms refuse
To wield the scourge. In vain I ask
Mercy of her, or help of heaven,
Her anger every day renews;
She still repeats her cruel task,
And smiles upon the torment given."

Here faulter'd the king's voice again:
And, like a child, he wept amain.
And the good sultan, at the view,
Let fall some bitter tear-drops too.
And, when they both were tir'd of weeping,
Uprose the sultan, full of ire,
And thus exhal'd his rising fire:

"We are in Allah's holy keeping!
And, by the Lord of life, I swear,
All other comforts to forbear,
To swallow nothing wet or dry,
Nor on the couch of sleep to lie,
Nor woman's wanton love to ply,
Nor shave my head, nor wash my face,
Nor to forsake this spell-girt place,
Till with my sabre I have sent
The sorceress to her punishment.
Now tell me where she can be found,
For all the rest I 'am pledg'd, and bound."

"The better to indulge her grief,
Which finds, in its excess, relief,
In a dark wood hard by, she will'd
A mournful residence to build,
Entitling it: The Home of Tears.
There, stretch'd in solemn state, appears,
As in a mausoleum tomb'd,
Her paramour, whom she has doom'd
To linger there in sad array,
By spells protected from decay.
He lies, unconscious of his lot,
With open eyes, but heeding not;
Nor hears her anxious amorous prayer,
But for one sigh, or tender stare,
To tell her that his love is there.
By day, by night, both soon and late,
Hourly she comes, to see if fate
Has taken pity of her woe;
And when (it always happens so)
She must her foolish hope forgo,
She utters such a doleful moan,
Poor soul! it pierces to the bone."

"How," cries with an indignant tone
The sultan, "I could almost vouch
You pity her—this is too much.
Me she shaln't make a fool of so.
Farewell, my tender fellow, now.
More of me you erelong shall know.
We soon shall pitch another strain."

Herewith he springs into the boat.
The king call'd after him in vain.
He pushes briskly cross the moat,
And at the garden's limit sees,
Embosom'd among darksome trees,
The Home of Tears—with lava-floor,
And roof of jet, and ebon door
Half open—and within the hall,

A bier with a black velvet pall,
Shrouded by incense-breathing vapors,
Lighted with yellow waxen tapers,
And, by the side of her dead Moor,
The queen low bending to deplore.

With sabre drawn the sultan presses
Into the room—not wasting gazes
On moonshine eyes, and sunshine tresses,
As might have happen'd to the dolt
Her husband—like a thunderbolt,
He burst upon her, and, before
She could look round, upon the floor
Lay headless both the queen, and Moor.
An executioner by trade
Could not have better us'd his blade.

Convinc'd the sorceresses' fall
Would put a welcome end to all,
Treading in air, like one victorious,
The sultan, not a little glorious,
Back to the dome with speed returns—
Glee, triumph, in his bosom burns.
With both heads in his hand upheld,
"Joy, brother," he exclaims: "I 've quell'd
The foe; my pledge is now redeem'd:
All has succeeded as I schem'd."

Imagine his surprize, to see,
Instead of thanks, and jubilee,
The poor king palen first, and soon
Shriek in despair, and sink in swoon.

"The longer this goes on the better,"
Exclaims the sultan in a rage,
"Let others fag for such a debtor;
For him I mount no more the stage.
Is this not to the fellow's mind?
Then let the' eternal devil find

The way this magic mesh to garble,
And, when he pleases, come and take
The milksop, with his fish and lake,
And swarthy spindle-shanks of marble.
An infant in a leading string
Would plague me less, than this same king."

Uzim, meanwhile, recovering slowly,
Began to vent his sorrows lowly:
"Now every spark of hope is null!
Now is my cup of misery full!
And nothing can undo my lot.
The essential has been quite forgot.
What can this pair of heads avail?
Will they reverse my cruel bale?
I must remain a marble stake,
The fishes fish, the lake a lake,
The Perie trine had not the power
To break the spells that round me lour;
Only the queen: and she 's no more.
Who knows she was not to relent?
She had not quite a heart of stone.
She might perhaps one day have lent
An ear of pity to my moan;
One day have learn'd again to feel.
Now she is gone, for ever gone,
And I continue as before.
Thanks to your over-eager zeal,
My every chance, alas! is o'er."

THE ASSES HEAD.

The sultan, though his temper fester'd,
While with these deep complainings pester'd,
Yet felt he had not much to say:
"Brother," quoth he, "this is distressing;
You don't seem under heaven's blessing;
Your lucky stars are not in sway.

I thought I acted for the best
To lay your miseries at rest;
It was my wish, my hope, my aim,
The motive of my living frame.
Your service was my only thought,
The event is surely not my fault.
'T is not in man to force success,
He may deserve it not the less.
But mayn't there be, to heal your grief,
Some other method of relief?
The world is wide; and genial powers
Provide us sunshine after showers."

"First take away," the king replied,
"Those gasping heads there, from my side.
I 'll own my weaknesses to you:
I really cannot bear to view
The loveliest of all creatures born
Thus from her throne of beauty torn.
Of what utility would be
The heads of all the world to me?—
The only one, that might restore,
Alas! is also now no more."

"What can you mean? what head is this?"

"A secret hear: from days of old
Lay in my treasury's safest hold
An asses head——"

"An asses?"

"Yes!
An asses head, be well assur'd,
If in a treasury secur'd,
Must have some virtues in its crown.
This was a head of great renown.
Encircled in a crystal shrine
With gold and jewels wondrous fine,

It lay, beside a roll of vellum
Full of hard words so strange and old
The very imams could not spell 'em;
And, in this volume, all was told
Wherefrom, and when, and how, and why,
The skull enrich'd our treasury;
What magic batteries it had storm'd,
What miracles it had perform'd,
In short its whole biography.
At every chapter there were found
Illumin'd on a golden ground
Paintings in miniature of stories,
Which laid the ground-work of its glories.
As on this skull, tradition said,
The fortunes of our house were laid;
Judge if the people held the relic
Was precious, sacred, evangelic.
Once in seven years 't was carried round,
In a gilt car with garlands crown'd,
From town to town in grand progression,
And music tim'd the slow procession.
Two elephants before it stroll'd
Caparison'd in cloth of gold,
And drew it on with silken ropes,
In loitering state, o'er smooths and slopes.
Rich tapestries every window bounded;
Blue lights its resting place surrounded.
Waving their boughs and banners gay,
Priests, soldiers, swell'd the long array.
Throngs came to worship, as it past,
Sweet flowers along its path they cast,
Spread the full boards of feast within,
And thought themselves absolv'd from sin.

"You wish me possibly to say
Wherein its hidden virtue lay.
It had the valuable power,
By its mere presence, any hour,
At once to put all magic sleight,

Charm, talisman, or spell, to flight.
Divs, Peries, Genies, of all classes,
Flitting apart, on wing in masses,
On good or evil errand bent,
Stood in its presence—impotent.

" Now you are of thus much possest,
You easily may guess the rest.
The queen, who was aware of all,
Felt that, to satisfy her gall,
She must withdraw this dread palladium
Out of my reach by many a stadium.
She did so—as I learnt too late.
Unable to annihilate
Its being, or to blast its power,
She caus'd in an unlucky hour,
The greatest treasure of the world
Into the ocean to be hurl'd.
This only source of hope to me
Lies at the bottom of the sea."

" That 's a bad job," the sultan said,
" The sea is rather deep and wide,
And at the lowest ebb of tide
Thereout to fish an asses head;
Moreover just this very one,
Is not a thing to bet upon.
Still let the possible be tried!
I 'll straitway issue sovereign orders,
In all the creeks, and coasts, and borders,
Rivers, and pools, of Vizapoor,
To fish for asses heads alone.
Who knows, but we may meet with your?
Meanwhile, spell-bound upon your throne,
You must, alas! remain, I guess.
That your ennui may be the less,
I'll send, to variegate your levee,
Of dancing girls a pretty bevy.
With music, hookahs, feasts, and play,

Confinement may be whiled away;
Or shall my writer, I 'll allow him,
Attend and read a Persian poem?"

The king of the black isles once more
Began his whinings as before,
Unwillingly let go his friend,
And thought his sorrows without end.
But, as no course was left to try
Than to submit to destiny,
He step by step forgot to weep,
Aud dropt upon his throne asleep.

Scarse was the sultan at his helm
Than orders issued through the realm.
The people marvell'd at the fuss;
"What matter asses heads to us?"

"I am afraid," thought many a clown,
"The sultan must have lost his own."

But the old fisherman at once
Bethought him of the asses sconce,
Which recently passed through his net.
"If this," said he, "should prove the pet,
More gold roopees will come to me."
Burning he hastens to the sea
For that bald skull-bone to explore,
Which almost broke his heart before;
And finds it presently at hand,
In the old place, upon the sand.
In short, my friends, for time is precious,
And change of topic will refresh us,
'T was soon discover'd, that this skull
Was just the one so wonderful.

Sultan and fisherman take wing
To share their pleasure with the king.

The shah no sooner touch'd the head,
Than all the long enchantment fled.
Dismarbled, free, he stalks around,
Finds his metropolis aground,
And fleets beside his ilands moor'd.
The fish, to citizens restor'd,
Swarm up and down the streets amain,
And recommence their choral strain:
"Moslem, Christian, Giaour, Jew,
Are all alike to duty true.
We spend the day in ceaseless moil,
And fare but poorly for our toil.
We faithfully come forth to reckon,
When you and yours are pleas'd to beckon.
We pay your debts, as well as ours,
Nor murmur at the higher powers."

To this collection, English nationality may, in our elder literature, oppose the Fables of Dryden, with some hope of dividing the suffrage of critics. Dryden's matter is generally of a more heroic cast, and his sentiments are of a higher-toned morality; his style, though careless, is more condensed and vigorous, and forcibly sweeps along the agitated reader; it pours a luxury of melody never attained by the labor of Pope, never approached by a German splice-work of anapæsts and iambics. Wieland's matter is chosen with more taste, embellished by a more dextrous insertion of circumstance, varied with more versatility, and more dazzlingly adorned with a hovering pomp of mythologic imagery, interposition, and machinery. No action unsuitable to the times in which it is placed, like that of Paldamon and Arcite, occurs here. No legend of a knight of Arthur is degraded, as in the Wife of Bath's

Tale, into a vehicle for modern satire. No false wit from the school of Cowley transforms a baron bold into an epigrammatist. No Sigismonda delivers a lecture on republicanism on being caught with her lover. If a sententious morality never obtrudes its formal preachments; yet an Aristippic philosophy, a knowledge of man, a cosmopolite-humanity, is really inspired by Wieland, however imperceptibly inculcated. In him, nothing negligent solicits forgiveness: he keeps present to his mind an idea of pure perfection, and is ever comparing his works, as they are, with what they might be made. Confident that they will one day be opposed to excellence yet unborn, he strives to meet the possible fastidiousness of a more intelligent posterity. His style is never careless, and attains in every subsequent edition the minute graces of increasing ease. A sauntering expatiation, always at leisure to gather flowers, is the habitual beauty, but in moments of crisis forms the defect, of his manner. Accustomed to be a spectator of the stage of things, he can at most describe the vehemence of an actor, not of an agent. A delicate shading, not the bold nor the abrupt, distinguishes the uniform copiousness of his style, which like the surface of the lake is smooth and clear, whether it reflects the waving willow or the mountain-crag; or like the sun's rays of the same density, whether they impinge on the gloomy cypress, on the choir of nymphs in their bath, or on the glittering cuirass of contending heroes.

But in our newer literature occurs a rival though a contrasting collection. The tales of Lord Byron have more originality of topic, more energy of narration, and deeper tragic interest: the author's intense feeling infuses every where a high pathetic force, and the

more torturing the emotion, the more transitive is the sympathy excited. Byron's tales are less various indeed than those of Wieland, as the hero is usually Childe Harold with an altered garb: Alp, Hugo, Lara, Selim, the Corsair and the Giaour are but fresh self-reflections too complacently repeated by this moral Narcissus: still the scenery of the drama is full of original delineations, vivid sketches from a hitherto uncopied reality. His style is condensed, stirring, picturesque, and assails the fancy with all the impressiveness of that nature from which its imagery is derived; but it is lyrical, abrupt, hurrying from one strong situation to another, always provoking the palpitations of the heart, and not always at leisure to communicate the whole story undertaken, which, as in the Giaour, is often told only by implication. Wieland on the contrary narrates with garrulous circumstantiality; he is chiefly attentive to ideas of the eye, and paints every part of his subject with indiscriminate industry; like the painter Vandermyn, he is not content to exhibit the beautiful tearful visage of the dying Sophonisba, he finishes as exquisitely the folded embroidery of her shawl, and the myrrhine vases on her toilet. Wieland dreads omission, Byron superfluity; Wieland amuses, Byron impassions; Wieland is more ideal, Byron more natural; Wieland pursues the beautiful, Byron the stimulant; Wieland delights to pourtray the Graces, Byron to animate the Furies.

To both writers belongs the high praise of imprejudice: they inculcate a manly liberty of thought, which fearlessly questions the established claims to veneration of the inmates both of heaven and earth; they wage war against superstition, against asceticism, against tyranny; they have extended the range of in-

tellect, enlarged the bounds of toleration, and scattered the seeds of freedom; they have powerfully assisted in winning for liberal opinions an enduring ascendancy in the literature of their respective countries.

§ 12.

Reviewal of Wieland's Collective Works continued, vol. XIX—XXIII—*The Abderites—Love for Love—Clelia and Sinibald —Oberon.*

THE ABDERITES, a work apparently historical, which fills the nineteenth and twentieth volumes, is a novel of a peculiar description. It is a contribution to the history of the human head and heart in their operations, not on nations, nor on individuals, but on small masses of men. It describes the pursuits and cabals of a confined and petty public, the politics of a borough-corporation, the intrigues of a rapacious city-priesthood, the squabbles of livery-men, and the law-suits of magistrates;—not in the form in which they appear daily under our own eyes, and in our own neighbourhood; but in the form which they would have assumed at Abdera in the time of Democritus. The urbane satirist points at Greeks, while he hangs the cap and bells on the heads of his own townsmen. This is accomplished with a truth of nature, and a conformity to authority equally admirable. Two articles of Bayle's dictionary, Abdera and Democritus, have furnished the main basis of fact: the outline has been traced from an industrious consultation of those Greek and Roman classics who have treated of this city and period; and the unauthorized ornaments, the invented colouring,

have that inherent probability which rivals or exceeds historic truth in its impression of reality.

The spirit of low faction and paltry discord, of local intolerance and vulgar spite, which this novel tends to remedy, is of itself expiring in England beneath the spreading polish of a liberal refinement: otherwise, one would earnestly wish for its translation, and for its dispersion among those nests of Abderites which the charters of our provincial towns once sheltered.

The twenty-first volume opens with *Love for Love*, a metrical romance; reciting, with exquisite ease, but in a somewhat antiquated style, which imitates the minstrel-manner, the adventures of Gandalin, a young knight; who was sent to travel, by his mistress, the fair Sonnemon, under the promise of acceptance at the end of three years, if he appears, on his own testimony, to have preserved during that period an inviolate fidelity to her. Toward the close of his probation, a lady implores his protection, whom some oracle had forbidden to unveil herself until she should interest in her behalf the affections of a gentle knight. She is returning home, disconsolate, with the thought of having taken the veil for life. The curiosity of Gandalin is excited; her conversation fascinates him; her form, which a treacherous attendant betrays to his view in a bath, entices him; and he is on the point of catching at the veil,—but preserves his constancy; when the fair unknown throws off her disguise, and reveals to him his own dear Sonnemon.

Clelia and Sinibald, a Sicilian legend, in ten books, relates the interwoven love-adventures of two Palermitan couple. The machinery is new. Asmodeus, the dæmon of sensual love, known originally from the story of Tobit, and more familiarly as the limping devil

of Le Sage—Saint Catharine, a favourite in the Sicilian calendar, and represented by painters as crowned with myrtle and armed with a sword—and Saint Christopher, whose reputed history seems to have been a consequence of his name—are the supernatural agents employed in bringing Sinibald and Rosina, Guido and Clelia, and two female attendants, together, on the paradisial iland of Lampedusa, then inhabited by only two hermits, who renounce their ascetic life, marry the two single women, and contribute their efforts to the further increase of this pious colony of happy lovers.

On the twenty-second and twenty-third volumes, it will be proper to expatiate a little: they contain the master-piece of Wieland—the child of his genius in moments of its purest converse with the all-beauteous forms of ideal excellence;—the darling of his fancy, born in the sweetest of her excursions amid the ambrosial bowers of fairy-land;—the *Oberon*—an epic poem, popular beyond example, yet as dear to the philosopher as to the multitude; which, during the author's life-time, attained in its native country all the honors of a sacred book; and to the evolution of the beauties of which, a Professor in a distinguished university has repeatedly consecrated an entire course of patronized lectures.

To an English ear, the mere name of Oberon startles curiosity; and fictions grafted on the tales of Chaucer, and connected with the fablings of our Shakspeare, would naturally be secure of some partiality of attention:—but it is not from English sources alone that the outline of this poem is derived. Its fable is triune. The first main action, consisting in the adventure undertaken by the hero at the command of

Charlemagne, is almost wholly derived from an old story-book of chivalry, entitled *Histoire de Huon de Bordeaux*;[3] well known to our antiquaries for having

3 The plot or story of Oberon is drawn from the old French romance entitled *Histoire de Huon de Bordeaux*, of which the original author is unknown; but he appears to have flourished at Troyes in Champagne, where a book-fair was annually held, and a manufactory of literature was established in very early times. Lord Berners, the translator also of Froissart, by his version of this romance, first introduced the character of Oberon to the notice of the English poets. Chaucer, in narrating the story of January and May, had called the king of the fairies, Pluto: but in Drayton's Nimphidia, in Shakspeare's Midsummer-night's Dream, in Ben Jonson's Masque, and in all the poets subsequent to Lord Berners, the name of Oberon is steadily assigned to the monarch of the Elves.

The history of Sir Huon of Bordeaux consists of two parts; of which the first only has supplied materials to Wieland: it is divided into sixty chapters of which the argument may be thus condensed.

Charlemagne is desirous of resigning his crown, not to Louis who is too young, but to Charlot, who had killed Baldwin the son of Oger the Dane. Amaury, the friend of Charlot, recommends to the emperor to seize the estate of the late Siegwin, Duke of Bordeaux, to the prejudice of his minor sons Huon and Gerard, and to endow Charlot with it. The Duke of Nismes, having dissuaded this confiscation, obtains leave to invite the two sons of Siegwin to serve Charles. The duchess promises to send them the ensuing Easter: Amaury and Charlot plan to waylay and assassinate them. The sons of Siegwin, travelling to Paris in company with the Abbé of Clugny, are suddenly attacked: Amaury wounds Gerard, and Charlot is killed by Huon. Huon arrives at court and accuses Charlot of a treacherous attack. Amaury comes with the dead body of Charlot, and lays the blame on Huon. Appeal is had to the judgement of God: Amaury falls in the duel, but without recanting his accusation. Charlemagne banishes Huon, but is induced by the peers to modify this sentence, and to permit his return, "in case he fetches from Babylon a handful of the beard and four double teeth of the Emir Gaudisse, whose daughter he is to kiss in her father's presence, and to bring with him to France." Huon undertakes the exploit, goes to Rome, confesses himself to the Pope, and meets with an uncle who accompanies him to Jerusalem. After paying their devotions at the tomb of Godfrey of Bologne, they set off for Babylon, and find in a hermitage Gerôsme, an old squire of Huon's father, who tells them of a wood near, in which king Oberon, who is three feet high but of angelic countenance, keeps his court. "The words of the dwarf are so pleasant to hear that none can get quit of him, and if you avoid speaking he will cause it to hail and thunder in order to compel you to go with him." Huon resolves to cross the enchanted forest.

These incidents, which fill twenty chapters of the old romance, are neatly framed in a single canto by the poet. Huon and his attendants next enter the wood. Oberon approaches "clad in a rich robe sparkling with jewels, a bow and arrow in his hand, and a bugle-horn on his neck," which the fairies of the isle Chifalonia had made. Gloriana had endowed it with the power of curing disease, Transelina with that of assuaging hunger and thirst, Marafasa with that of exciting to sing and to dance. The dwarf accosts Huon and his attendants, and, being displeased at their silence, raises a storm. Oberon next sounds the horn which compels Huon and his comrades to dance and sing. He then twangs his bowstring, when four hundred men appear and surround the travellers. Oberon pretends to order their punishment; but Glorian, one of the fairy-soldiers, pleads for them, and advises Oberon to address them once more. A conversation begins. Oberon says he is a son of Julius Cæsar by the lady of Chifalonia, who was formerly beloved by Florimon of Albany. A fairy, who had not been invited to the birth of Oberon, bestowed on him the gift that after three years of age he should grow no taller: another fairy, Transelina, the gift to read the thoughts of others: a third, the gift to pass instantly from place to place. Oberon adds that he is king of Mommur, and is one day to die and be buried

furnished to Shakspeare the name, but not the character, of Oberon. The Elves, over whom he is made to preside, are mythological personages of Gothic origin; who, according to the Edda, numbered Iduna in their choir.—The second main action, consisting in

at Paris. Oberon then builds a palace instantaneously, and offers a grand repast to the travellers, during which he produces a cup which fills itself with wine in the hand of every one who has not committed a mortal sin. Oberon gives to Huon the horn and the cup, and dismisses him with ominous but affectionate tears. Huon arrives at Tourmont, where he finds a second uncle, who is become a moslem, and in whose hand the cup remains dry. This apostate contrives treachery against Huon, and attacks his retinue; but the sound of the horn diverts the soldiery from warfare to dancing. Oberon appears with a large army, and the people of Tourmont agree to be baptized. Oberon cautions Huon against the giant Angulaffer: "two brazen men with flails stand threshing at his gate." Huon goes to the tower and delivers the damsel Sebille: he slays the giant and takes his ring. Huon arrives at the shore of the Red Sea: Malebron, a fairy of Oberon's train, in the form of a triton, carries Huon across, and lands him in a mouth of the Euphrates, close to Babylon. By means of Angulaffer's ring, Huon enters the palace; strikes off the head of the sultan's right hand neighbour, kisses the beautiful Esclarmonde in her father's presence, is attacked, is overpowered, is dragged to prison. Esclarmonde visits him in confinement. Gerôsme, and the rest of Huon's companions arrive at Babylon, and plot with Esclarmonde in his behalf. The giant Agrappart comes to levy tribute on Babylon; the sultan is dismayed: Huon offers to fight the giant: he is set free for that purpose, takes the giant prisoner, and compels him to receive baptism. Huon then sounds his horn, and, by Oberon's assistance, massacres all the Babylonians who will not turn Christians. He then cuts off the sultan's head, and beard, and draws his teeth, which Oberon conceals in the side of poor Gerôsme. Oberon forbids Huon to have carnal commerce with Esclarmonde, before they arrive at Rome, and are regularly married; presents him with a yacht, and leaves him with ominous tears. Huon, having bestowed the lady Sebille on an emir, sets sail, and is tempted to infringe at sea the chaste injunction of Oberon. A tempest wrecks the vessel on a desert iland. Pirates carry off Esclarmonde. Huon is left bound to a tree. Admiral Galaffre of Anfalerme takes the ship of the pirates, one of whom prevails on King Yvoirin of Montbranc to order Galaffre to give up the prize. At the instigation of Glorian, Oberon sends Malebron to deliver Huon in the form of a triton; this spirit swims with him across the sea to Montbranc, where a minstrel informs Huon of the fortunes of Esclarmonde. Huon offers his services to King Yvoirin, and wins a game at chess of his daughter, but declines, from fidelity to Esclarmonde to avail himself of the conditions of victory. Huon joins the expedition against Anfalerme, and kills the nephew of Galaffre, for which he receives great honors from Yvoirin. Gerôsme arrives at Anfalerme, enters the service of Galaffre, and becomes engaged against Huon; but they discover each other on the field of battle. Esclarmande is restored to Huon: they arrive at Rome: they are married by the Pope.

Such is an outline of the wild and uncouth story-book which originally supplied Wieland with the more prominent adventures related in his metrical romance. The skill by him exerted in suppressing the unconnected, the anachronic, the dissonant circumstances, in withdrawing the needless personages and anecdotes, in supplying new incidents where the fable was abrupt or incomplete, in adapting them consistently to the times, places, and persons, but especially in giving to the mythological characters an interest of their own in the event, which provides an adequate motive for their interposition, cannot too loudly be commended by the critic, or too minutely studied by the poet. In what Aristotle calls the *systasis*, or combination of the several parts of the plot, still more than in the picturesque beauty of the style, or the antiquarian accuracy of the costume, consists the peculiar excellence of this poem.

the adventures of Huon and Rezia after their union, is more scantily borrowed from the French romancer, and more freely new-modelled by pruning away redundant adventures, and inserting fresh incidents.—The third main action passes wholly in the machinery of the poem, among its mythological personages, and consists in the reconciliation of Oberon and Titania; whom a rash oath, sworn on the occasion of their quarrel in the garden of January and May, unwillingly separates,—until some mortal pair should set such an example of insuperable fidelity as Huon and Rezia at length realize. By means of this over-plot, (for the adventures of the gods may not be called an under-plot,) these three distinct actions are completely braided into one main knot; so that neither could subsist nor succeed without each of the other;—and so that all are happily unwound together by a contemporary solution. Huon could not have executed Charlemagne's order to fetch the beard of the Caliph of Bagdad, without Oberon's assistance; without this order, Huon's passion for Rezia would not have arisen; and without the hope which Oberon builds on their constancy, the Elfen king and queen would have had no motive for interfering with their fortunes. From this reciprocal importance, this mutual dependence of the heroes and of the gods, a peculiar species of unity arises, which has not merely the merit of novelty, but forms the characteristic source of the perpetual interest of this poem. In other epopœas, the supernatural characters seem introduced merely "to elevate and surprize;" as if they belonged, like turgid phrases and long-tailed similes, to the arts of style: they interfere, only that the action may acquire strangeness and importance; they split into factions without a rea-

sonable ground of discord; and, with the mischievous fidelity of subordinate partisans, are made to adhere to their champions through perfidy and guilt. In the *Oberon*, it is for interests of their own that they intervene; and the mechanism of their providence, while it guides by an irresistible necessity the conduct of the human agents, has still a motive for every interposition, and never stoops from heaven either to inflict or to reward from capricious tyranny or vague curiosity. The gods of Homer have no obvious and intelligible interest in either the demolition or the preservation of Troy; and Virgil preserves with almost as slight a pretext the traditional distribution of their factions. Tasso has scrupled to make use of those personages of the Christian mythology, to whom a natural interest might have been ascribed in the liberation of Jerusalem; and thus his machinery is nearly as capricious as the wizardry of Ariosto. Milton, indeed, has planted hostility between his angels on the sufficient provocation of the apotheosis of Jesus: but there is a bathos in passing from the war of heaven to a contest about an apple. Wieland alone has annexed his machinery by an adequate link; while he preserves to his Elves that "diminutive agency, powerful but ludicrous, that humorous and frolic controlment of nature," and that care of chastity, which their received character among the fathers of song required them to sustain.

The Oberon is divided into twelve books. In the first, Sir Huon, journeying through the forest of Libanon, being benighted, is hospitably received by a forester, once the squire or companion of the duke of Guienne, who had been killed in the holy land, and who was in fact Siegwin, the very father of Sir Huon.

To this countryman and friend, the knight relates his setting off for Paris, to obtain the investiture of his dukedom,—the treacherous insult offered to him on the road by Charlot, son of the emperor, whom he kills in the conflict—the consequent anger of Charlemagne—and the command never again to appear in France until he should bring the beard and the daughter of the Caliph of Bagdad, having slain his left-hand neighbour at the table. The 12th to 26th stanzas are subjoined.

XII.

Thence toward Bagdad he hies with loosen'd rein,
And ever thinks anon the town to reach,
But many a hilly steep, and many a wild,
And many a forest thick, his steps detain:
It teases him he cannot talk their speech;
The Bagdad road he asks of every child,
But to his words in *oc* can none the answer teach.

XIII.

Once the lone road, he chose to follow, lay
Athwart a wood, and while the storm-rain gushes,
He had the whole long day to beat the bushes,
And often with his sword to hew his way
Through the close coppice. Tir'd, he climbs the hill
To look about: alas! the forest still
Seems to grow wider at each sad survey.

XIV.

Amid this wilderness, whence e'en by day
To hope an outlet might have pass'd for idle,
Well might his trouble border on dismay,
When murky night her mantle round him throws:
Not a star glimmers through the knitted boughs:
Well as he can, he leads his horse by the bridle,
His head against the trees comes in for many blows.

XV.

An unknown wood, the sky so raven-black,
And what for the first time invades his ear,
The lion's thundering growl, now far, now near,
Amid the deadly stilness of the hour
Deep from the distant mountains bellow'd back—
The living wight who ne'er knew fear before
All this with ease, I ween, might teach to tremble sore.

XVI.

Our knight, though ne'er appall'd by woman's son,
Feels the slack sinews of his knees unknit;
Adown his back an icy coldness glides;
But there 's no fear able to quell a whit
That boldness, which to Bagdad spurs him on:
His cutlas drawn, his horse in hand, he strides
Till he a path discerns, which to rough caverns guides.

XVII.

Nor long he wanders, when afar he thinks
A cheerful gleam of fire feebly blinks:
The sight pumps up more blood into his cheek.
Scarce knowing shall he wish or no to find
In these wild heights a face of human kind,
The fleeting shimmer he pursues to seek,
Which gleams and disappears, as the path climbs, or sinks.

XVIII.

At once, where crags their precipices lift,
A roomy den before his footstep gapes.
A fire crackles near. From the dark fern
The rocks illumin'd thrust their wondrous shapes
With bushes shagg'd that nod adown the rift
And in the flickering ray seem with green fire to burn.
In fearful pleasure wrapt the knight advances swift.

XIX.

"Halt!" thunders sudden from the cavern's lap,
And lo a savage rudely shap'd appear'd.
Wild-cat-skins sow'd in clumsy manner flap
About his thighs. A grey and curly beard,
Once black, along his brawny bosom err'd.
His shoulders bear a cedar-club for strife,
Of force to rob at once the stoutest bull of life.

XX.

Our knight, undaunted by the man, or fiend,
With the huge cedar-club and griesly beard,
In his own only tongue explains his mind.
Sweet music from the banks of the Garonne!
Exclaims the forester. What have I heard?
For sixteen years I dwell this wild alone,
And all the while my ears have missed this darling tone.

XXI.

Welcome to Libanon! though for my sake
I shrewdly guess that to this dragon's nest
Your dangerous journey you don't undertake.
Come, rest you here, and may you find a zest,
In what good mother Nature will afford.
My cellar here supplies your thirst to slake
Only a cold clear spring—a spare repast, my board.

XXII.

Great joy at this salute the hero feels,
And with his landsman seeks the cave below;
Mistrusting nought he hastes his armure off to throw,
And stands unweapon'd, like a youthful god.
The forester seems touch'd by Alquif's rod,
When the knight's face th' unbuckled helm reveals
And in big yellow rings long shiny tresses flow.

XXIII.

How like, he cries, in forehead, eye, mouth, hair!
Like whom, inquires the wondering Paladin.
Young man, forgive! A sweet deceit I win,
A dream of better times, though bitter, dear,
It cannot be; and yet himself seems here,
When that fair hair its golden pride unfurls
Though his a broader breast, and yours more yellowy curls.

XXIV.

Your tongue bespeaks you of my native land:
Cause there must be that you his shape receive,
For whom in banishment so long I grieve,
Alas! it was my hap him to outlive.
His eyes were closed by this most faithful hand;
His early grave I wet with many a tear:
How strange thus once again in you to see him here.

XXV.

Chance, says Sir Huon, sometimes plays such game.
It may be so; rejoins the wondering host,
And yet the love I bear you, gentle youth,
If from illusion sprung, is honest truth,
Would you vouchsafe to Scherasmin your name—
My name is Huon: and it is my boast
From Siegwin to descend, late sovereign of Guyenne.

XXVI.

My heart misgave me not—in tears exprest
The glad old man and fell at Huon's feet—
Welcome, thrice welcome in this wild retreat,
Son of my lord and master, of the best
And worthiest knight, that ever armure drest.
In children's petticoats you gaily ran
When to the holy tomb our pilgrimage began.

For what reason Wieland has altered the name of the squire from the Gerosme, or Jerom, of the old chronicle, to Scherasmin, which is neither a Christian nor a Gascon name, and therefore out of costume, is not easily guessed.

In the second book, Sir Huon and his new friend, proceeding toward Bagdad, are attacked by Arabs, whom they rout; and the squire is provided with a horse from among the booty. The way now passes through the park of the Elfen king. Scherasmin has heard of fairy-pranks, and wishes to avoid the dangerous precincts: but Huon chooses the strait road. When they approach the palace, Oberon, in a car drawn by leopards,[4] the lily-sceptre in his hand, advances to meet them. Scherasmin, terrified, seizes his master's horse by the bridle, and urges their flight at full speed, until they reach the holy ground of a convent within view, where he thinks it safe to stop. Meanwhile, lightnings, thunder, and rain pursue them, and drive back into the court-yard a procession of monks and nuns, who were performing in concert their pious orgies. Oberon appears in the midst of them;—the sky is again serene;—he applies a bugle-horn to his lips, and an irresistible disposition to dancing seizes the motley crowd: Friar or sister, Scherasmin or lady-abbess, none are spared from this comic ballet, except Huon, who alone remains standing. At length, weariness throws them all on the ground: Sir Huon intercedes for his companion, and Oberon offers to him an empty cup, which fills itself with wine on being applied to the lip, and presently recruits the exhausted squire: the horn and the cup are then presented to Sir Huon by the king of Elves.

4 Ben Jonson had harnessed two white bears to Oberon's car.

The third book opens with the episodical adventure of Angela, whom Huon delivers from the giant Angulaffar; and it closes with a dream, in which Oberon first vouchsafes to the hero a sight of Rezia. The hint of this vision is borrowed from the Persian tales, where a couple are similarly enamoured.

In the fourth book, Sir Huon delivers from a formidable lion a treacherous Mohammedan, who rides off with his horse, and obliges him to purchase a shabby mule, on which Scherasmin arrives in the suburbs of Bagdad. An old woman offers accommodation for the night, which they accept. (Prince Calaf is thus harboured in the Persian Tales). This woman is mother to the nurse of Rezia, and tells them that the princess was to be married on the morrow to Babekan, prince of the Druses; although she abhorred him, having fallen vehemently in love with a strange knight, whom a beautiful dwarf, with a lily-sceptre in his hand, had presented to her in a dream. The emotion of Sir Huon, his appearance, his yellow hair, convince the old woman that he is the desired stranger; and she runs at day-break to the seraglio with news of his arrival.

Book V. Rezia, informed by her nurse Fatima of the arrival of the yellow-haired knight, decks herself for the feast, and takes place at the table, on her father's right hand: Babekan being on his left. Sir Huon finds beside his couch the gala-dress of an Emir; and at his door, a horse richly caparisoned, and pages who conduct him to the palace. He passes for a wedding-guest of the first rank, and is admitted to the hall of banquet. He discovers, on the left-hand of the caliph, the treacherous Mohammedan whom he had rescued in the forest, and strikes off his head with

a scymetar. On perceiving Rezia, he throws aside his sword and his turban, and is recognized by her as his yellow locks descend. The lover's fly into each other's arms.—Meanwhile, the caliph orders an armed guard to seize the intruder. The intreaties of Rezia and the courage of Huon are unable to resist them: but the mystic bugle-horn is now sounded, and every inmate of the palace, Caliph, Imam, Circassian, eunuch, negro, is attracted to mingle in antic motley dance. Sir Huon applies to the caliph for his beard, while Scherasmin and Fatima make the necessary preparations for flight. Oberon intervenes; and the two couple are safely transported through the air to Askalon. This whole canto is a master-piece of narrative and interest: the meeting of the lovers communicates to the reader an electric transport, and is one of the finest moments in the whole compass of the epopœa. Huon's behaviour to Rezia is exquisitely proper; and the appearance of Oberon (st. 67 and 68) is truly sublime. Perhaps the dream at the beginning was needless: there had been much dreaming already.

In the sixth book, before the lovers embark for Europe, Oberon warns them to consider each other as brother and sister, until Pope Sylvester should pronounce the marriage-blessing on their union. "Should you (says he) pluck the sweet forbidden fruit before the time, Oberon must withdraw his protection."—— The four companions set sail for Lepanto; and Jerom, to amuse their leisure, recounts a history which he had learnt from some Calender. This story is no other than Chaucer's January and May, here called Gangolf and Rosetta; at the close of which, Oberon is made in anger to quit Titania, with an oath "never again to meet her in water, air, or earth, until a faithful couple,

united in mutual love, shall by their purity atone for the guilt of the unfaithful pair; and, remaining true to their first affection, shall prefer death by fire to a breach of fidelity even for the sake of a throne." Rezia's first view of the sea affords a fine stanza: but, in general, this canto is trailing and tedious, worthier of Chaucer than of WIELAND: the 70th, 71st, 72d, 73d, and 74th, stanzas might with advantage be wholly omitted; and many others require to be compressed: nor have Gangolf and Rosetta sufficient consequence to justify the interference of Wieland's ennobled Oberon and Titania with their fortunes.

Book VII. Our amiable hero and heroine arrive at Lepanto. The presence of old Scherasmin begins to grow inconvenient to Sir Huon, who sends him forward to Marseilles, with the casket containing the caliph's beard; and he himself takes shipping for Salerno. His passion for Rezia grows hourly more sensual and more impatient; and at length 'In Hymen's stead *Amor* crowns their union.'

XVII.[5]

At once the heav'ns are darken'd, quench'd each star!
Ah! happy pair! they knew it not—the wave
Howls as unfetter'd winds o'er ocean rave:
Their tempest-laden pinions roar from far!
They hear it not—with rage encircled round,
Stern Oberon flying thro' the gloom profound
Rushes before their face—they hear him not!
And thrice the thunder peals their boded lot:
And ah! they hear it not, each sense in rapture drown'd!

[5] Here, and in the next quotation, I avail myself of Mr. Sotheby's elegant version.

XVIII.

Meanwhile the tumult maddens more and more;
Fierce from all sides at once a whirlwind breaks;
Rock'd by rude gusts the earth confus'dly shakes,
The welkin flames, with lightning vaulted o'er:
High in the air by surging tempests cast,
The world of waters bellows to the blast:
The vessel reels at random to and fro;
The boatswain calls in vain, while shrieks of woe
Ring thro' the staggering ship, all hope of safety past!

XIX.

The wind's unbridled rage, the heav'n that burns,
Enrapt in flames like hell's sulphureous tides,
The crackling of the vessel's rifted sides,
That now, as rise and fall the waves by turns,
Sinks buried in the dark unfathom'd deep;
Now rocks upon the billow's ridgy steep,
While all beneath in foamy vapour dies:
These sounds, of power to force the dead to rise,
Awake the conscious pair from love's enchanted sleep.

XX.

Wild darts Amanda from his fond caress—
"Our doom is seal'd!" she cries with dread affright:
Conscious of guilt, he prays the guardian sprite
To shield, at least, Amanda from distress—
At least for her he dares the god implore—
In vain!—no pray'rs his former grace restore:
He comes th' avenger of the guilty soul,
Stern to inflict the doom—the horn and bowl,
The fairy gifts, are gone—he hears and saves no more!

XXI.

Meanwhile the captain calls th' assembled crew—
"Ye see your doom—we all at once expire!
The stormy wave, rude blast, and lightning fire,
With still-increasing rage the ship pursue!
We soon must perish in the wat'ry grave!
Never till now such tempests swell'd the wave!
At once we sink in ocean's yawning womb!
Haply the guilt of one has seal'd our doom:
One whom the lightning seeks—his death the rest may save!

XXII.

"Implore offended Heaven to mark by lot
The destin'd victim with unerring arm—
Is there among you whom my words alarm?
Thus doom'd to die together on the spot,
Who, but the wretch self-judg'd, has cause to fear?"
He spoke, and all approve the words they hear.
The priest the chalice brings, the lots they cast,
Round him they fall upon their knees aghast!
He breathes a prayer to Heaven, and bids the crew draw near.

XXIII.

Fill'd with dire bodings, but in manly mood,
Huon comes forth, and as he passes by,
On poor Amanda turns his soothing eye:
She, mute, and agoniz'd, and bloodless stood,
An alabaster image, icy cold!
He draws—oh, fate! oh, Oberon! behold,
He draws the lot of death with trembling hand!
Mute, with fixt gaze, the rest around him stand,
The while he reads his doom, pale, patient, uncontroll'd.

XXIV.

"Thine, Oberon!" he cries, "'t is thine the deed!
Full well I feel it, tho' I view thee not—
Stern god! I feel thy presence in this lot!
Thou didst forewarn me of the fate decreed—
Guilt dares not sue for pardon—just my doom!
Hurl me relentless spirit! to the tomb!
Spare but Amanda!—mine alone the guilt!
Be on my head thy hoarded vengeance spilt!
I bow—nor shall these lips to breathe a hope presume!

XXV.

"Ye, whom my death now rescues, shed one tear,
One pious tear, to mourn my hapless doom!
Victim of ruthless fate in youthful bloom!
Not wholly guiltless ends my brief career,
Yet honor firmly trod my path before—
Ah! tranc'd in bliss, the oath I rashly swore,
And warning voice one moment I forgot!
My sole offence man's universal lot,
To be one moment frail, then lost for evermore!

XXVI.

"I, doom'd by frailty, fall in youthful prime!
Yet to my fate without a murmur bend—
No, I repent not, tho' stern death impend!—
Is love a sin? may Heaven forgive the crime!
All other duties from remembrance fade.
Ah! save by love how could'st thou be repaid?
Thou! who for love did'st every hope resign!
Not ocean's depth can dim its light divine;
No, it immortal glows, and lives in Huon's shade!"

XXVII.

Here swells his heart—he holds his icy hand
O'er his sunk brow; then mute and still remains.
What monster, steel'd to woe, the tear restrains?
The hearts of all, who round in silence stand,
Dissolve with pity.—Sterner thoughts arise,
And pity's transient gleam unnotic'd dies!
His death is safety—'t is the life of all!
Heaven, in his doom, decrees that guilt should fall!
How shall frail man resist the judgement of the skies?

XXVIII.

The storm, that from the time Sir Huon spoke
Had seem'd awhile its fury to assuage,
Now smote the ocean with redoubled rage:
Incessant lightnings on the vessel broke—
"Perish the wretch!" bursts forth the general cry:
The captain beckons, "Fate forbids reply!
Since no delay your life can longer save,
And death more fiercely bellows from the wave,
Perish! it must be so—by Heaven condemned to die!"

XXIX.

The Paladin moves on with steady pace:
At once amid the crew, th' empassion'd fair,
So long the lifeless statue of despair,
Darts wild with woe to Huon's last embrace.
Loose, like a lion's mane, her ringlets sweep
Before the blast! With eyes that cannot weep,
With love to phrenzy wrought, with high-swoln breast,
And circling arms, round Huon closely prest,
She hurls him with herself amid the swallowing deep!

Superior still, if possible, is the eighth canto; in which the lovers discover, in a distant corner of the iland, an old hermit; who receives them into his dwelling. The pregnancy of Rezia advances. Her parturition is at once the newest, the most delicately managed, and the most affecting incident of the poem. Titania, the Elfen queen, who had chosen this iland for her residence since her lamented separation from Oberon, performs for Rezia the mysterious services during the hour of her throes. The story of the hermit is perhaps too much in common life for a book of marvels.

LXVIII.

The hour was come: opprest with silent woe,
Amanda, lingering, near the cottage strays,
'Mid fragrant shrubs that shade her secret ways,
Where opening flow'rs around profusely blow,
And breathe fresh incense on the gale of morn.
Down a small path she wanders on forlorn;
Then stops before a grot, where ivy weaves
The rich luxuriance of her clust'ring leaves,
While day's resplendent beams their glossy tint adorn.

LXIX.

Oft had Alphonso wish'd to view the grot,
And tried to enter the forbidden place:
And venturous Huon oft intent to trace
The wonders of the strange mysterious spot,
Had tried in vain the secret to explore;
They stood with nameless terror thrilling o'er,
And if they forward stept with daring force,
A strange resistance barr'd at once their course;
Against them seem'd to rise a vast yet viewless door.

LXX.

Their spirits sunk in deep mysterious gloom,
Their steps retiring slid with noiseless tread;
And none again, so strong, so strange the dread,
To tempt the horrors of the place presume—
If till that time untry'd, 't is all unknown:
Enough, that now Amanda, fearless grown,
No longer can the bold attempt withstand:
Onward she calmly steps—with gentle hand
Removes the ivy web, and enters in alone.

LXXI.

At once, a secret shudder gently steals
Along her frame, upon a yielding seat
She sinks, where moss and blooming roses meet.
Now inly feels, thro' bone and marrow feels,
Thrill upon thrill swift-piercing anguish dart—
'T is past—sweet languor steals upon the smart—
It seems, that o'er her eyes pale moon-beams glide,
Gradual, in deep and deeper shadow dy'd,
Till softly hush'd to sleep, oblivion stills her heart.

LXXII.

And from within her a confusion gleams
Of lovely shapes; some o'er her sweep, some roll'd,
Each in the other floating, fold on fold;
Mixture of wond'rous mood—and now it seems
Before her knees three lovely angels stand:
Clear to her gaze their mystic rites expand:
And, lo! a woman veil'd in roseate ray,
Holds to her lips, as dies her breath away,
A wreath of roses fresh that bud beneath her hand.

LXXIII.

For the last time her higher beating heart
Thrills with a short and softly-silenc'd pain—
The forms are fled away—she swoons again—
And now, without remembrance of a smart,
Wakes to soft notes, and seems afar to hear
Their low-lull'd echoes dying from the ear.
The sister forms are vanish'd from her view,
Alone before her, rob'd in roseate hue,
The gracious elfine queen soft-smiling deigns appear.

LXXIV.

Within her arms repos'd a new-born child:
She gives it to Amanda—then, as blown
At distance, in a wink away is flown:
Sweet odors breathe where late the fairy smil'd—
The dreamer opes her disenchanted eyes,
And darts her hand, while now the vision flies,
To catch the hem that gilds her robe of light—
In vain—the whole is vanish'd from her sight—
Her hand but grasps the air—Amanda lonely lies!

LXXV.

One pulse-beat more—and how divinely great
At once her mingled wonder and delight—
She feels, she sees, yet trusts nor sense nor sight
She feels herself delivered from her weight,
While in her lap a quivering infant lies,
More beauteous than e'er blest a mother's eyes;
Fresh as a morning rose, and fair as love—
And, oh! what thrills her swelling bosom move,
While soft she feels her heart against him fondly rise.

LXXVI.

She feels it—'t is her son!—with rapture wild,
Bath'd in warm tears from sweet sensations prest,
She clasps him to her cheek, her mouth, her breast,
And looks with eye unsated on her child.
He knows her, sure—sure answering rapture his,
Leave her at least the visionary bliss!
Lo! his clear eye to her's responsive speaks,
And lo! his little mouth that wistful seeks
Warm from her lip to suck the sweet o'erflowing kiss.

LXXVII.

She hears the silent call—how quickly hears
A mother's heart! and follows it untaught,
With such delight, such soul-transporting thought,
That, sure, if angels bending from their spheres
Could gaze on earthly scenes with envious eyes,
Envy, at such a sight, had reach'd the skies.
She lays the lovely suckling on her breast,
While tenderest sympathy, supremely blest,
Feels in her heart new springs of purest transport rise.

LXXVIII.

Meanwhile with ceaseless search the groves around,
Huon, two livelong hours had sought his bride!
But all in vain—his eye no trace descried:
At last he wanders to this holy ground:
He ventures near and nearer to the spot,
Tries, unresisted, the forbidden grot—
Oh! heart-felt rapture! how supremely blest!
Amanda with an infant at her breast,
Sunk in a flood of bliss, all else on earth forgot.

LXXIX.

Ye, whom kind nature gifted at your birth
With that possession which outweighs all joys.
That endless treasure which no time destroys,
Not to be bought with all the wealth on earth;
Which in this world of sin to God recalls,
And in another where no sin enthralls,
Follows our heavenly being unconfin'd,
Gift of a feeling heart, and virtuous mind!
Look, and behold that sight!—the holy curtain falls—

Book IX. The ship which Huon had quitted is compelled to make the port of Tunis, instead of Salerno; and the captain sells his remaining passenger, Fatima, for a slave, to Ibrahim, chief gardener of the Sultan. Jerom, thinking that his casket of white hair would not convince Charlemagne in Sir Huon's absence that his commands had been fulfilled, determines to rejoin his master at Rome; and not finding him there adopts the costume of a pilgrim to go in search of him, and traces his ship to Tunis; where Fatima gets him employment in the royal gardens, under old Ibrahim. Titania steals away the young Huonnet. Rezia, searching for him along the shore, is surprised by pirates, and hurried on board a ship. Huon, rushing to her assistance, is overpowered by numbers, and left behind, bound to a tree.

Book X. The action henceforth hastens to solution. Oberon wrecks the ship of the pirates in the bay of Tunis, near a terrace, whence the sultan Almanzor sees Rezia brought ashore: he also sends a spirit to unbind Huon, who is borne to the door of the gardener Ibra-

him, and employed under him. In the French romance, the name of the spirit who carries Huon through the air is Malebron: it has here been suppressed: but it was perhaps worth while to have connected the mythological personages still further with the fictions of Shakspeare, by introducing the spirit of the Tempest, and reading st. 14, l. VIII, *Sich Ariel ihm der sein Vertrauter war.*

Book XI. Almanzor is now an avowed suitor to Rezia. Huon, apprised of her arrival, attempts to see her by lingering in the garden, but meets the sultaness Almanzaris, who determines to avenge the altered sentiments of her husband, by courtesy to the handsome gardener. She tempts him, vainly, in her chambers, surrounded with every luxury and every enticement. She then appoints him deceptiously in the bath-house, and assails his constancy by her naked embraces. The sultan intervenes; she denounces Huon as a ravisher; and he is condemned to die by fire. She visits him a third time in prison; and offers to arm numerous slaves in his behalf, and to give him the throne and bed of her husband. He remains inflexible.—The voluptuous scenes of this canto are no where surpassed even by the author himself: it will bear comparison with Acrasia's bower of bliss in Spenser, and with Tasso's garden of Armida.

Book XII. Almanzor is also unsuccessful with Rezia; who, having discovered the doom of Huon, goes to solicit his life. The sultan offers it on condition of her compliance:—she disdains him. He threatens her with a like fate, and orders her execution. The two lovers are now bound to the stake on a pyre, like Olindo and Sofronia. The torch is just applied, when Almanzor, at the head of one troop, rushes forwards

to save Rezia; Almanzaris, at the head of another, to rescue Huon; and Scherasmin, in a solitary suit of black armure, also appears, scarsely hoping more than to fall beside his master. Their zeal, however, is needless;—the condition of Oberon's oath is accomplished:—their bonds are broken: the bugle-horn hangs again on the neck of Huon, and a tune involves in one vast dance the executioners and the assailants. The car of Oberon descends, and removes Huon, Rezia, Scherasmin, and Fatima, first to the palace of Oberon to witness the feast of his reconciliation with Titania, where Huonnet is restored to his parents; and next to the banks of the Seine, where they are finally settled with a rich provision of furniture and magnificence. A tournament at Paris impends: the prize is Sir Huon's land; which, from his long absence, is supposed escheated to the crown. Sir Huon enters the lists unknown, and wins the stake: he then presents the casket, Rezia, and his son, to Charlemagne, in whose bosom all animosity expires.

Such is the well-rounded fable of this metrical romance of chivalry. It were difficult to suggest a blemish in it. Yet, as the author has thought fit to convert the heroine to a religion which peculiarly enforces the duty of chastity; and as the turn of the whole story, not less than the law of France, sets a considerable value on the marriage-ceremony;—we have sometimes been tempted to think that this conversion should have been reserved until the sojournment on the iland; and that the nuptial benediction should there have been pronounced by the hermit, previously to the interposition of Titania.

In the whole poem occur but few similes; they belong, no doubt, to the exhausted class of ornaments.

The style is less diffuse and trailing, less exuberant of circumstances and particulars, than in most productions of Wieland. It abounds, as in all his works, with sensible imagery and picturesque decoration: it studiously avoids the English fault of substituting general terms, and allegoric personification, for specific description and individual example. It does not habitually aspire at elevation, at grandiloquence, at pomposity; and, by this apparent easy negligence, it obtains *a wider arc of oscillation*, and can with less discrepancy descend to the comic or ascend to the sublime. Milton and Klopstock assume the highest tone of diction which language admits: they have seldom resources in reserve when they wish to soar above their usual level of diction, but become affected, bloated, unintelligible. Milton's war of heaven is tame, and Klopstock's ascension is tedious: they have continually been on the stretch; and on great occasions they sink, as if unequal to their subject. Virgil and Tasso excel in the next degree of exaltation, and probably maintain the highest tone of style which is really prudent in the solemn epopœa.[6] Homer, Ariosto, and Camoëns, have chosen a humbler but more flexile manner, which can adapt itself without effort or disparagement to a greater diversity of emotion and incident; which is more capacious of variety, and more accommodating to circumstance. In this respect they have served as models to the author of *Oberon*, who describes with equal felicity a palace in uproar, or a ridiculous dance; the hostilities of a tournament, or the conflicts of concupiscence. To the delineation of great passions, or the contrast of complex character,

6 Pope's Iliad and Mickle's Lusiad adopt a higher pitch of tension than the style of the originals.

his subject did not invite: he is naturally equal to the tender and the beautiful; and no where disappoints the tiptoe expectation which he rouses. His characters, if few, are consistent and distinct. His learned attention to the minutiæ of costume, whether Gothic or Oriental, may encounter without shrinking the armed eye of even microscopic criticism. The adventures of heroes are by him brought home to the affairs of ordinary life, to the bosoms of common men, and are thus secure of a sympathy coeternal with human nature. The busy life of his narrative, and the felicitous structure of his story, further contribute to his unrelenting power of fascination. The reader clings to his book by a magnetism which a sublimer genius is often unable to emanate; and he returns to it with increased attraction. If there be an European poem likely to obtain, on perusal, the applause of eastern nations by its voluptuous beauties of imagery and magic magnificence of fancy, it is this: in a good Persian translation, it would less surprise by its singularity than enrapture by its perfection.

§ 13.

Reviewal of Wieland's Collective Works continued, vol. XXIV —XXX—*Disquisitions—Dialogues of the Gods, (four of which are extracted)—Dialogues of the Dead—Operas—Remarks on the French Revolution—Fairy Tales.*

THE twenty-fourth volume of these works comprises *Literary, Philosophical, and Historical Disquisitions,* alike remarkable for elegance and erudition. The first is a letter to a young poet, advising him either to make poetry his primary pursuit, or to abandon it altogether. The second discusses the question, "What is truth?" Wieland considers it as a mutable, relative, individual impression, little connected with the state of the external world:—a conclusion favourable to Pyrrhonism. In the third disquisition, philosophy is contemplated as a remedy for diseases of the mind. The fourth notices various symptoms of reviving credulity and superstition, lately exhibited in Berlin, in common with other European capitals. The fifth is an antiquarian investigation of early pastimes and games: it may furnish some additional anecdotes to the author of "Chess;" and it may, in turn, derive some correction from a paper published by Sir William Jones in the *Asiatic Researches.* The exquisite dissertation which follows, on the Ideals of the Greek artists, tends somewhat to disperse that consecrated glory, which, in the consideration of a classical mind, is too apt to hover over

the productions of antiquity; it may change the *nimbus* into a *halo*, less delusive and less unfavourable to an equitable appretiation of their merit. The overrating of ancient art has perhaps been an obstacle to modern improvement. The account of the Pythagorean women terminates with an interesting tribute of gratitude for the personal domestic happiness enjoyed by the author. The Apologies of Aspasia, of Julia, and of the younger Faustina, form an important piece of historic criticism: particularly the second, which is especially directed against a misrepresentation contained in Blackwell's Memoirs of the Court of Augustus.

The twenty-fifth volume includes *Dialogues of the Gods, and Dialogues of the Dead*; which are separated from each other without any very obvious line of demarcation. The second colloquy, for instance, between Livia and Faustina, might as well have passed in Elysium as on Olympus. These dialogues were all written during the three years which the author employed in his excellent translation of Lucian, and are deeply tinctured with the peculiar hues of that original. They exhibit nearly an equal geniality of humor, with fewer tautologies of style; the same slight of sneer, with higher urbanity of satire; the same diverting wit and radiance of fancy, with a more dramatic individuality of character, a wider range of personification and command of allusion, and an aim more definite and important; the same Epicurean hostility to imposture, and indulgence for pleasure, with a more profound penetration into human spirit, and a loftier care for human excellence. Among the more fortunate of these dialogues, may be numbered some which relate to the French revolution, but which have now lost their freshness. Of these the more prominent

were already translated into English in 1795, and published for Johnson of St. Paul's Church-yard, in a separate volume. The age of retribution, the panacea, the two parts of the federation, are retained in this final edition of Wieland's works; but several others had appeared in the *Mercur*, (for instance, a dialogue between Brutus, and Charlotte Corday,) which have been dropped by the author without any obvious reason: his habitual equity, and imperturbable calmness, would still command admiration: the frown of power, the excesses of the people, shook him not; the ruins of a broken world fell round him fearless.

Less temporary in their character are the objections to a particular providence, in a confabulation between Hercules and Jupiter; the defense of dignified images of the gods against the iconoclasts, in a conversation between Lycinus and Athenagoras; the satire on mysticism, in a dialogue between Proserpina, Luna, and Diana, who vainly strive to explain to each other the doctrine which teaches that each is Hecate, until the appearance of the real Hecate terminates their controversy; the comparison of Paganism with Christianity, in a debate between the principal Roman divinities; and the interlocution of Jupiter and Numa with a *stranger:* who is still so, says Wieland, to most persons in our own times, and who here appears to resolve some important problems relating to his real character and aim. These five are subjoined.

I.

JUPITER *and* HERCULES.

On the government of the world, and on sons of gods.

HERCULES, JUPITER.

HERCULES. Is it permitted, father, now that we are *tête-à-tête*, to ask you a free question, or two?

JUPITER. Ask what pleases thee, my son.

HERCULES. I have long wished to know, whether it be really true, as the good men below flatter themselves, that you take such a particular interest in their conduct, meddle in all their affairs, keep a register of all their wishes and prayers, and, in short, govern the world only for their sakes.

JUPITER. Son, thou askest a great deal in a breath; nor would I answer every one so frankly as thyself: but for thee, who hast always been my favourite son, I have no secrets. Now, as for the government of the world, *(leaning his head to the ear of Hercules, and speaking in a whisper,)* that has never been a concern of mine.

HERCULES, *(looking at him with broad eyes.)* How, and who governs them if you do not?

JUPITER. Hear me, my dear Hercules, thou must not ask more than I myself know. I have never studied metaphysics much, nor would they be of any use to me. Every one has his own sphere of action, I have mine; and it has long been my rule to consider that which is *above me* as no part of my concern. The world, my dear serpent-slayer, is a great deal bigger than thou seemest to imagine. It has never occurred to me to endeavour to measure it; but this

thou mayest take for granted on my authority, that the district which it has been allotted to me and my family to superintend, occupies a far smaller portion of the whole, than the little kingdom of Thespia does of the earth, where you gave your first proofs of heroism at the expense of the lion of Cithæron, and of the fifty daughters of Thespius.

HERCULES. As to this last affair, father, I can assure you it took place so naturally, that it would not be worth while to compliment me upon it, if those extravagant fellows, the poets, who never relate a thing as it is, had not dressed up the story. But I beg pardon for interrupting your observations.

JUPITER. I never suspected the thing to have happened otherwise than naturally, as thou seemest to admit. It is one of those deeds which a son of Jupiter needs not blush at, and which will not often be done again. But to return to what I was saying—the village of Thespia, where the grandfather of your fifty children was king, cut at that time but a small figure on the earth, and yet this little kingdom of Thespia is perhaps a ten-million times smaller portion of the earth, than the system of planets, which I have to guide, is of the great whole; or what in the language of gods, to which thou must now accustom thyself, is emphatically termed the world. Higher, my dear Alcides, we will not at present try to penetrate into the secrets of the universe.

HERCULES. Your portion, Jupiter, is surely a very respectable one.

JUPITER. In order to be something in our own eyes, we must always measure ourselves with something less.

HERCULES. It is then true, in spite of the presump-

tuous speechifier at Athens, who was maintaining the contrary, that you are the supreme sovereign of men, and exert an immediate providence over their affairs.

JUPITER. True, and not true; as thou art inclined to take it.

HERCULES. True, and not true; I know not how to take that; you are joking with me.

JUPITER. What was this Athenian speechifier saying?

HERCULES. Lately, as I was going past my temple in the Cynosarges, I stept in for a minute, and heard a half-naked, broad-shouldered fellow, whose hair hung in thick dark locks over his forehead, warmly disputing on this point with a lean old man bearded like a goat. Jupiter, said the first, must have plenty of leisure, if he were to trouble his head about all the silly contradictory prayers, which at every instant are put up to him in every corner of the earth.

JUPITER. The man is not so much out.

HERCULES. Is it not, he continued, shameful that every conceited puppy should dream, that the king of gods and men is only there to be his messenger, his house-steward, his cook and butler, his stable-boy, his banker, in short his factotum; and that Jupiter is always on the watch to see where and when every man, who is too lazy or too aukward to help himself, has occasion for his assistance.

JUPITER. The man speaks gold, my son: I must put down his name in my pocket-book. Dost thou recollect it?

HERCULES. They called him Menippus, if I heard right.

JUPITER. Him I know: one of the most biting Cynics, but a fellow with as clear eyes and as sharp a nose, as ever fell to such a one's lot.

HERCULES. And if, continued he, Jupiter were so excessively complaisant as to let himself be employed at these people's pleasure any how, still they evidently expect more of him than he is able to perform.

JUPITER. But too true! but too true!

HERCULES. How, father, can't you do whatever you will?

JUPITER. Whatever I will. Yes, my good Hercules, that I can, and do you know why?

HERCULES. Because you are Jupiter.

JUPITER. Ill-guessed, my son. I can what I will; because I only will what I can.

HERCULES. Do I hear right, that you cannot do all things.

JUPITER. There are two little difficulties which I never yet could overcome.

HERCULES. And these are?—

JUPITER. First, that, with all my omnipotence, I could never bring it to bear that two and two should be more or less than four: and secondly, that, as soon as the adequate cause of a thing is there, I could never prevent the effect from following. Thou canst not imagine, son, within what narrow bounds my omnipotence is confined by these two fatal conditions.

HERCULES. How? if any one were about to cut off the nose of your colossal representative at Olympia, with a Scythian cutlas, could not you restrain his arm?

JUPITER. If I stood beside him, and became aware in time of his intention, certainly. But before I could proceed hence to Olympia, the whole fine work of Phidias might be hacked to pieces.

HERCULES. And for what are the Cyclops always so busy every year in making you thunderbolts?

JUPITER. Thou must be aware that I am not always

holding ten thousand thunderbolts in my fist, in order to hurl them where they might do execution. And were I to do so, yet I could not cause any thing that has once happened not to have happened.

HERCULES. But you can prevent its happening.

JUPITER. Yes, as far as no adequate cause for its happening is there.

HERCULES. This cause then is what you have to do with: you must hinder its becoming a cause.

JUPITER. But when it is already extant?

HERCULES. With all due respect, Jupiter, you make me impatient. When the Centaur Nessus was for running off before my eyes with the beautiful Dejanira, I knew how to prevent his being the cause of her abduction. I sent one of my arrows after him, and hit him so precisely, that he was obliged to let slip his charming prize.

JUPITER. This came to pass because the Centaur Nessus was indeed the cause of the seizure of Dejanira, but not the cause of a successful carrying off. Tell me now, when thou wast seated among the maids of queen Omphale in women's clothes, wast employed to spin, and expected a slap of her slipper if the thread was drawn too thick or too thin, didst thou then think thou wast acting a part quite worthy of the son of Jupiter and Alcmena?

HERCULES. No, by Hebe's cup of nectar! I did not.

JUPITER. Yet thou couldst stoop to such degradations?

HERCULES. I did what I could not help.

JUPITER. So!—and why so!

HERCULES. Because love had overpowered me.

JUPITER. And how came love to overpower a man of your force.

HERCULES. Excuse me, Jupiter, but, if you can ask that, you must never have seen the beautiful Omphale. Speaking respectfully, I almost doubt whether you yourself would have behaved a bit better.

JUPITER. Let that alone. Thou acknowledgest then, that the eyes of the beautiful Omphale produced effects irresistible. And yet, my son, you could if you would.

HERCULES. How could I?

JUPITER. The infallible method to have prevented her eyes from exercising so tyrannic a power over thee, would have been to shut thy own.

HERCULES. Then I must have shut them before I saw her; for as soon as I had once seen her, it was impossible to me not to wish always to see her.

JUPITER. On this occasion then thou hast experienced, that there are causes whose effects cannot be prevented.

HERCULES. Yes; a passion like love.

JUPITER. The passions of men, my son, are the very things which would every minute disturb my plan, if I had any with them. Usually therefore I abandon them to their own folly. They have just reason enough to discover this, when they have done any thing very absurd, and at last through their very blunders they acquire prudence, but mostly when it is too late to avail them.

HERCULES. By your leave, this is an odd way of governing, if I may be so free as to speak out.

JUPITER. Well, so it is. Yet I do not mean to say, through the knowledge which I have of the nature of men, and of the things on which they depend, that I am not able to assert a certain influence, and so to guide causes and effects as I think most conducive to the welfare of the whole. But, that I should give myself the trouble to work the will of each, or to aim

at their gratitude and approbation, never came into my head.

HERCULES. You would in that case have to perform a labor, to which my twelve celebrated actions would be child's play.

JUPITER. It would be undertaking the impossible, and that has never been my plan. To render this comprehensible to thee, I will add thus much, that nothing can be more opposite than my way of viewing things, and theirs.

HERCULES. How do you mean, father?

JUPITER. I will give thee a little instance. Lately some Roman epigrammatist made a pair of impertinent distichs on the fact, that a vain barber, who by the emperor's favor was raised to the dignity of senator, and become rich, had a marble sepulchre erected to him by his heirs. "How," says the witling, "comes the barber Licinus to a marble tomb: Pompey has but a stone one, and Cato none. Who can behold this, and believe in gods?" The man fancied he had invented a strong argument against us, and a thousand blockheads applauded his sophism.

HERCULES. That was stupid in them. Pompey, considering what he was, might well be content with sandstone; and a man like Cato needs no monument: but the barber required one of marble to gratify the vanity of his heirs, and to make posterity believe that their ancestor was a man of consequence. That is palpable.

JUPITER. And granting it were unjust that Licinus should have a marble monument, and Cato none; what have the gods to do with it? Ought I to have smitten in pieces with thunder the marble sepulchre, or to have employed Vulcan to build one for Cato. The fools! if they thought it necessary to remark on the fact,

why did they not take the blame on themselves. Why are the gods to be censured, if the degenerate Romans have lost all care for freedom and for virtue, and all shame at having lost their reputation.

HERCULES. A thunderbolt or two would be well-spent on such fellows.

JUPITER. What art thou talking of, Hercules? What would become of the poor human race, if I were to punish all their follies with my thunderbolts. Yet such judgements, and such inferences, I hear every day.

HERCULES. So then the fellow with the thick dark locks was not so much out.

JUPITER. That we need not grant him without due limitation. Between thee and me it is another thing.

HERCULES. As I am, which is not often the case, in a cue for questioning, may I ask one more?

JUPITER. Be concise then—for I hear the Muses are beginning the hymn which announces that dinner is ready.

HERCULES, *(looking Jupiter steadily in the face.)* It regards a point of private history, which nobody can better clear up than yourself. Have I the honor to be your son, Jupiter?

JUPITER. Whence so suddenly this modest doubt? Hast thou not done enough to prove thyself a son of Jupiter?

HERCULES. To speak out—if what the poets after their manner have added to my history were withdrawn, I do not see why I might not have accomplished the rest as a mere son of Amphitryon.

JUPITER. That is more than Amphitryon himself believed. Thy mother Alcmena may bear comparison with Europa, or Danae, or Semele, or Leda; and I think thou mayest be content with the father she has

given thee. Is it not enough for thee, to be reputed among men as my son, and not to be denied by myself. What wouldst thou have more?

HERCULES. I speak with my heart in my hand. After all, a man can be neither more nor less than he is, whatever he passes for among others. If therefore I have to thank him for being what I am—

JUPITER. My brave son, we must not look too nicely into such things. On the birth and merit of the sons of the gods must for ever repose a somewhat coarse veil, which to lift or to rend is neither easy nor useful. Let it suffice thee, my dear Hercules, that thou art in possession of the table of the gods, and of the lovely Hebe. Let us go.

III.

JUPITER OLYMPIUS—*that is his statue at Olympia,* LYCINUS *a statuary, and* ATHENAGORAS.

The scene is in the temple at Olympia.

LYCINUS, *(after long contemplating the god in silent transport, prostrates himself before the statue.)* Thanks to the Gods, that I was not to depart life without enjoying this divine vision, without seeing and adoring the presence of the king of gods and men.

ATHENAGORAS. How! are you too one of those blind wretches, who, in an idol made with hands, canst worship the enemy of God and man, the chieftain of the outcast spirits of hell. From your age and countenance I should have taken you for more rational.

LYCINUS, *(apart, after looking steadily at Athenagoras.)* What manner of man can that be? however

I guess at the bird by his song. I must not answer, or be very calm. How is it possible, friend, that this awful and soul-exalting spectacle, this intuition of the highest idea of majesty, to which the genius of an artist ever yet gave representation, can produce on you so unnatural an effect.

ATHENAGORAS. I grieve for the polished ivory and the plates of gold, which the idolaters of Elis have squandered so damnably, in order to retain the ignorant people in their delusion, and to direct the honor of adoration, which alone belongs to the true God, to a colossal statue of clay, plated indeed with ivory and gold, but kept together internally by a scaffolding of balks and spars and laths, as hollow as the childish credulity of its adorers, who fall down before a harbour of vermin, a dwelling place of mice and rats. What a deity for a rational creature to kneel before!

(Lycinus continues to gaze with enthusiasm on Jupiter, without vouchsafing any answer to Athenagoras, who after a pause, continues:)

ATHENAGORAS. You answer not, idolater; and that is the wisest course to take: for what can be opposed to a truth as clear as daylight?

LYCINUS. Were you a mere sophist, I should perhaps reply: but who would argue with the blind about light and colors, or with the deaf about the charms of music?

ATHENAGORAS. You do me injustice if you think I am not aware of the art and excellence displayed in this great work of the celebrated Phidias. What I abhor is the abuse made of art, when it is rendered instrumental to a damnable idolatry.

LYCINUS. By your leave, you entertain strange prepossessions. How can you call the noblest work of

sculpture, which genius and art ever united to produce, an abuse of art? Or how can art be more worthily employed, than, by a visible representation of deity, to imbue mortals with a feeling similar to that, with which the awful appearance of the godhead would in fact transpierce them. What can a theophany be, if this is not one?

ATHENAGORAS. All this would be correct enough, if it were question of the only true God.

LYCINUS. What do you call the only true god?

ATHENAGORAS. What a question from a reasonable man! Who but the invisible, eternal, unfathomable, omnipresent, creator, and preserver of heaven and earth? Whose existence your idolatrous forefathers must have suspected, even amid the thick mist which clouded their understandings, since they erected to him at Athens an altar inscribed, "To the unknown God."

LYCINUS. And how would you have had Phidias represent this invisible, omnipresent, all-comprehending, unknown God?

ATHENAGORAS. He cannot be represented. The eternal original being can as little be comprized in an idea, as in a visible form.

LYCINUS. No doubt. Phidias then, in your opinion, ought not at all to have made his Olympian Jupiter?

ATHENAGORAS. How can you ask such a question? It was an impious undertaking to make an image, which should seduce simple men into those emotions of veneration, which alone belong to the God who cannot be represented, and who dwells not in temples made with hands.

LYCINUS. It appears to me, that, if you follow up this principle consequentially, you must either banish reli-

gion from the world, or require of men to have ideas corresponding with no external object. Our oldest lawgivers held it expedient for the good of civil society, to evolve the obscure feeling of a great first cause of all, which slumbers even in the rudest natures, and which has often been mischievously employed by designing impostors. In order to give shape and bent to this feeling, they endeavoured to ally or associate it with some sensible object, the presentation of which might excite and enliven the internal impression. They were compelled, therefore, to substitute for what is by its nature incomprehensible, a symbol of it, adapted, however, to awaken the highest ideas of perfection which man can form. This occasioned, when the plastic arts had attained a certain degree of refinement, the adoption of human figures of divinity. For how much soever the imagination of the most gifted of men may strain itself, it will for ever be impossible to invent a nobler, more beautiful, or more perfect form, than the human. But as this seldom or never exhibits itself with all its perfection in individuals; it is proper, in order to exalt it into a worthy symbol of divine nature, to omit what time, or passion, or accident, may have degraded or deformed in this or that man; and by the combination of all that is expressive of excellence, to ennoble and exalt the human form to a more than human grace and beauty and majesty; and to create as it were an ideal figure, free from the expression of the weakness, the wants, and the cares of humanity; and thus to stamp on it that spirit of imperishability, of immortal youth and strength, in short that character of divinity, which so remarkably exalts the sculptured gods of Phidias above those of his brother-artists, although some of them have ex-

celled him in making statues of men. This ideal beauty and majesty he has in so high a degree impressed on his Jupiter, that I am persuaded, you must, in spite of your prejudices, do yourself considerable violence to keep under and repress that involuntary feeling of admiring veneration, which it is adapted to produce. And this, which is the highest merit of the artist, would you reckon among his faults?

ATHENAGORAS. What pitiable delusion! And is it not a fault, not a crime, in a statuary, and the very greatest he can commit, to employ all the resources of his art to give your Jupiter, who was not even an upright man, the resemblance of a king of gods and men. To me, and to other enlightened persons, this may not be dangerous; but to men, who from their childhood have been accustomed to kneel before idols, it must be so. How should they view a piece of sculpture like this, without being strengthened in their idolatry: this I feel, and this I cannot forgive to Phidias.

LYCINUS. For my part nothing amuses me more than to hear men reproaching each other with their prejudices. I willingly acknowledge that we have ours; but yours surely must lie a little heavy on your eye-lids, if you do not perceive that it is the highest merit of the artist, that he has represented to us the king of Gods and Men with a majesty, which must at once efface and put to flight all traces of the false impressions, which the allegoric tales of the poet, and the foolish legends of the mythologist, may have left upon our brains. What more is needful than to cast one's eyes on this Jupiter Olympius, to feel that this is not the fabulous Jupiter, who caressed Leda as a swan, or fell in a golden shower upon the lap of Danae, but that this is the true and real Jupiter.

ATHENAGORAS, *(smiling.)* The true and real Jupiter; that is as were you to speak of true Sirens and real Centaurs. Ha! ha! ha! the true Jup—Kyrie Eleison, what is that?

LYCINUS. Ye gods, what do I behold. Is it possible that the illusions of art can go so far? How? The God animates himself. A celestial fire radiates from his eyes, he moves his brows, the temple trembles, the earth quakes, a thunder-clap——

JUPITER, *(again sinking his eye-brows, says smiling to Athenagoras:)* Thou art a cruel man, Athenagoras. Take from me at thy own peril, all thou canst: but thou wilt not deny to me in my own presence that I am what I am.

LYCINUS. Now, sage Athenagoras, or whatever you call yourself, how do you feel?

ATHENAGORAS. For this I was not prepared. *(He makes many crosses, and begins to exorcize Jupiter.)* Apage, Satanas! Ego exorcizo te in nomine——

JUPITER. Signa te signa temere me tangis et angis!

(ATHENAGORAS *continues crossing himself, and mutters between his teeth the formulas of exorcism.)*

JUPITER. Be quiet, foolish man. Thou seest that I intend thee no harm. I only wanted to convince thee that Jupiter Olympius is verily and indeed Jupiter Olympius.

ATHENAGORAS, *(to himself.)* What a capital confirmation of our doctrine, that the idols of the heathens are no other than the apostate angels, who let themselves be adored by these deceived people, and haunt the images of such gods.

JUPITER. What art thou murmuring to thy beard?

ATHENAGORAS. Pride thyself not too much in the short delay which is still granted thee, thou outcast

spirit. Thy kingdom will but too soon come to an end. I hope to survive the day when thy golden beard will be coined into drachmas.

JUPITER. As the world goes that is not impossible. I hope to survive far stranger things.

ATHENAGORAS. The whole world will fall off from thee; thy temples will be destroyed, thy altars subverted, thy statues dashed in pieces, and thy priests must starve, or adopt another faith.

JUPITER. So much the worse for them and for you. I shall nevertheless remain what I am: and you will be the only ones who lose by it. For on this you may rely, that your mythologists will produce no Phidias, and your Phidiases no Jupiter Olympius.

ATHENAGORAS. Could I have any doubt who thou art, I should detect thee by this courteous language.

JUPITER. Thou art a queer fellow, and I would yet awhile amuse myself with thee, had I not other cares. Farewell, and learn of Jupiter how to bear with fools.

V.

PROSERPINA, LUNA, DIANA, *who meet in a fork-way.*

PROSERPINA. How lucky it is that chance has so unexpectedly brought us together. Now we may clear up a point which has long troubled my comprehension.

LUNA. What can that be Proserpina?

PROSERPINA. Look me narrowly in the face, Luna; observe me from top to toe, before and behind, and tell me, upon thy virgin honor, whether thou wouldst have taken me for Diana, if I had met thee by myself?

LUNA. I doubt it much. Your whole figure and

costume is so different, that it were impossible, in my palest shine, to mistake you.

PROSERPINA. But to thee and Diana it must often have happened, that each of you fancied she saw herself when you have at any time met.

DIANA. We? what a singular idea! I take Luna for myself? She must become a mere looking-glass ere that will happen.

LUNA, *(ironically smiling.)* Were the difference between Diana and me still smaller than I had flattered myself it was, yet I know myself too well to be capable of so singular an error.

PROSERPINA. You really do not seem aware that all we three, though under different characters and names, are but one and the same goddess.

LUNA. How? thou art I?

DIANA. Thou Diana?

PROSERPINA. That I will not exactly maintain: but thou art Hecate, and thou art Hecate, and ye are both Hecate, without my being less Hecate than yourselves.

DIANA. Excellent! and who prates such stuff?

PROSERPINA. O! those say it who must know—the mythologists.

DIANA. The mythologists may say what they please: I think I must know best who I am; and, until I am afflicted, like the daughters of Prœtus, with the nymphomania, no one shall make me believe that I am Luna or Proserpina,—still less both at once.

LUNA, *(smiling.)* Do not grow warm, Diana; who can say whether the mythologists, after all, may not know us better than we do ourselves. They would not maintain a thing so positively, if there were not something in it.

DIANA. Hear me, Luna; on this score I can put up with no jokes. I have every imaginable regard for thy merits, but I should by no means take it well to be mistaken for thee. I do not grudge thee thy Endymion, and the fifty daughters of whom thou madest him the father on Mount Latmos; but I must beg leave to decline the honor of passing for their mother.

LUNA. Diana, Diana, do not compel me to speak, or I shall remind thee of something at which, were I Diana, I should blush more deeply than at the honor of being the mother of fifty lovely girls.——Actæon!

DIANA. Thou wilt not surely throw that in my teeth: was he not punished severely enough for the misfortune of having unintentionally beheld me bathing?

LUNA. The Fauns have very free tongues, Diana; and mortals, who always judge of us by themselves, cannot conceive that a goddess, who had no personal motives for not caring to be surprised in a bath, should so cruelly have punished the handsome huntsman for a moment of innocent admiration. They think it less unjust to thee to believe the story of the Fauns, who are known to be a prying set, and who attribute the metamorphosis of Actæon to a collision between thy tender regard for reputation, and thy extraordinary complaisance toward the youth.

PROSERPINA. As it seems, I have no little right to regard the honor of forming but one essence with Diana and Luna as somewhat equivocal. But, as in my own person I am Proserpina, I can very well allow that two or three things be laid to your charge for which I might not exactly care to answer. Our being all three one and the same Hecate, does not prevent, if I rightly understand the mythologists, that each in her own person remains what she is. So that I am neither Luna nor

Diana, but Proserpina; thou neither Proserpina nor Luna, but Diana; and thou, Luna, neither Diana nor Proserpina, but the same Luna who presented the happy Endymion with fifty daughters.

LUNA. Ah, now I have hit on the explanation of the riddle. Hecate is merely a name, which belongs to us all three.

PROSERPINA. Not so. Hecate is no mere name, but the real, and true, and substantial Hecate, who consists of us all three conjointly, and is therefore called the three-fold and the three-formed.

DIANA. We are both then Hecate, as well as you.

PROSERPINA. So say the mythologists.

DIANA. If so, then, there are three Hecates,—that is clear.

PROSERPINA. By no means. I see that you have not yet understood me.

LUNA. Didst thou but understand thyself, my good Proserpina! How can we be but one, when, as thou seest, there are three of us?

PROSERPINA. Three indeed, in as much as I am Proserpina, thou Luna, and she Diana; but only one Hecate, in as much as Luna and Diana are as much Hecate as myself.

LUNA. Acknowledge, goddess, that, with thy mythological subtleties, thou takest advantage of our poor wits. We are, and are not. I am thou, and thou art not I. We are three, and we are one; and what no one of us is singly, that we are all together. What wild gibberish! I will not be Luna, if I understand one word of it.

PROSERPINA. I am not a whit better off, my dearest. I hoped, by our meeting, that the thing would be cleared up; but I must own, that, in endeavouring to

render comprehensible to you what is to me utterly incomprehensible, my head turns round,—I see blue and green. Had we but a mythologist here.

LUNA. He would so completely confound us, that all the hellebore in the world would not set us right again.

DIANA. Do you know what, goddesses, the best way is to think no more about the matter. The mythologists may say of us what they please, they can neither make more nor less of us than we are. Let us each go our own way, and—Great Jupiter! what a horrible noise is there! don't you hear.

LUNA. I hear a barking, as of a thousand dogs; and a hissing as of ten thousand snakes.

PROSERPINA. Lightning flashes from the ground; storm-winds howl athwart the wood; the cracking oak-trees are uptorn by the roots.

DIANA. The earth quakes beneath my feet,—it cleaves,—and tongues of sulphureous flame dart forth. What a shape rises from the abyss! Have you ever in your lives seen any thing so horrible?

PROSERPINA. A woman ascends at least three hundred ells in height. Lightnings, as thick as one's arm, are scattered from her eyes. Instead of hair, brown-and-blue speckled serpents hang in grisely braids about her skull, or curl in hissing locks adown her livid shoulders. Instead of walking upon feet, she crawls along upon two monstrous dragons: in her left hand a flaming pine-tree, in her right a huge poignard.

LUNA. I am not for staying, I assure you,—let us hence. *(They all three run toward the forest, and light upon Nymphs and Fauns, also fleeing, who call to each other, "There 's Hecate,—Hecate is coming.")*

DIANA, *(to Proserpina.)* Dost thou hear what the nymphs say,—this must be the real Hecate!

LUNA. Better and better. I hope, at least, I am certain of not being this Hecate.

PROSERPINA. Thanks to heaven that another, whom it more beseems, is delivering me from the inconvenient honor of being Hecate. What she is, and whether she be threefold or fourfold, let her settle with the mythologists. For my own part, I am content in future to pass for the mere Proserpina. Good night, goddesses; I return to my gloomy husband.

DIANA. I to my Dryads and greyhounds.

LUNA, *(low.)* And I to my Endymion.

VI.

JUPITER, JUNO, APOLLO, MINERVA, VENUS, BACCHUS, VESTA, CERES, VICTORIA, QUIRINUS, SERAPIS, MOMUS, & MERCURY.

Jupiter and Juno, with the other inhabitants of Olympus, are seated at table in an open hall of the celestial palace: Ganymede and Antinous offer nectar to the gods, while Hebe presents the cup to the goddesses. The Muses perform exquisite symphonies, while the Graces and the Hours execute pantomimic dances; and Jocus occasionally provokes the happy gods to loud laughter. In the midst of their highest joy Mercury flies hastily in.

JUPITER. Thou art late, my son; why so pale? What news from below?

VENUS, *(to Bacchus.)* Something goes cross: how haggard he looks!

MERCURY. My intelligence is ill suited to increase the pleasure that prevails here.

JUPITER. At least thy countenance is, Mercury.

What so unfortunate can have happened as to trouble even the enjoyment of the gods?

QUIRINUS. Has an earthquake overthrown the capitol?

MERCURY. That were a trifle!

CERES. Has an eruption of Ætna desolated my darling Sicily?

BACCHUS. Or an untimely frost shrivelled the Campanian grapes?

MERCURY. Mere nothings these!

JUPITER. Out, then, with thy tale of woe.

MERCURY. It is only that—*(he stops short)*

JUPITER. Make me not impatient, Hermes.—It is only—what?

MERCURY. That at Rome, on a motion made by the emperor himself in full senate, thou hast by a majority of voices been formally abolished.

The gods all rise in great consternation from table.

JUPITER, *(who alone remains seated—smiling.)* Only that! I have long expected it.

ALL THE GODS AT ONCE. Jupiter abolished, is it possible?

JUNO. Thou talkest a little wildly—Mercury. Feel his pulse, Esculapius.

THE GODS. Jupiter abolished?

MERCURY. As I was saying—by a majority of voices formally and solemnly declared to be a mere effigy, a man of straw; nay still less, for an effigy is a thing: but Jupiter is voted to be a non-existence; deprived of his temples and priests, and of the dignity of protector in chief of the Roman empire.

HERCULES. This is mad work, Mercury: but as sure as I am Hercules, *(swinging his club,)* they shall not have done this for nought.

JUPITER. Patience, Hercules! So then *Jupiter Optimus, Maximus, Capitolinus, Feretrius, Stator, &c.* has played his part out!

MERCURY. Thy statue is overthrown, and they are violently busy in demolishing thy temple. The same tragedy will be repeated in all the provinces of the Roman empire. From every corner, legions of bearded savages will break loose with fire-brands and pick-axes, leveling, in their fanatic fury, the venerable monuments of the ancient religion of the people.

SERAPIS. Woe is me! for my magnificent temple at Alexandria, and my splendid colossal statue! If the desert of Thebais pours forth against it but half its holy forest-devils, all is over!

MOMUS. Never mind it Serapis; who will presume to touch thine image, when it is a known fact at Alexandria, that, at the least profanation which a sacrilegious hand might attempt, heaven and earth would crumble to pieces, and all nature sink back into chaos?

QUIRINUS. We cannot always depend on these things, my good Serapis. It might happen to thee as to the golden statue of the goddess Anaitis at Zela, of which it was believed that the first, who should lay hold of it, would at once be smitten paralytic to the ground.

SERAPIS. And what happened to this image?

QUIRINUS. When the triumvir Antonius had beaten Pharnaces near Zela, the town and the temple of Anaitis were plundered, and no one knew what became of the goddess of massy gold. After some years, it chanced that Augustus supped at Bononia with one of Antony's veteran soldiers. The emperor was heartily welcomed; and the conversation at table turning upon the battle at Zela, and the pillage of Anaitis's temple, he inquired of his host, as an eye witness, whether it

were true that the first who laid violent hands on her was struck dead on the spot. "Thou seest the rash man before thee," said the veteran, "and hast feasted on one of the legs of the goddess. I had the good luck to catch hold of her first; Anaitis is a very good sort of personage; and I acknowledge with gratitude that to her I owe the competency which I possess."

SERAPIS. This is cold comfort, Quirinus. If the world goes as Mercury reports, I cannot promise a better fate to my colossus at Alexandria. It is quite provoking that Jupiter can look on so calmly at such misdeeds.

JUPITER. It were well, Serapis, if thou didst the same. For a god from Pontus, thou hast enjoyed long enough the honor of being adored from the east to the west, and canst hardly expect it to fare better with thy temples than with mine: or that thy colossal statue should last longer than the divine master-piece of Phidias. Be contented to let another inherit thy strowings of palm-leaves—if we must all go, thou canst not think of remaining, and standing alone.

MOMUS. Ho! ho! Jupiter!—where are then thy boasted thunderbolts, that thou so patiently bearest thine overthrow?

JUPITER. Witling, if I were not what I am, I would with one of them reply to this silly question of thine.

QUIRINUS, *(to Mercury.)* Thou must tell me this over again, Hermes, if I am to believe it. My flamen abolished, my temple shut, my festival no longer observed—and are the enervate, servile, unfeeling, Romans sunken to this degree of ingratitude toward their founder?

MERCURY. It were deceiving thee to give any other information.

VICTORIA. Then need I not ask what is become of my altar, and my image in the Julian court. It is so long since the Romans have unlearned the arts of conquest, that I think it natural for them impatiently to bear the presence of my statue. At every glance which they cast on it, they must feel as if it reproached them with their shameful degeneracy. With Romans, whose very name is become among the barbarians a word of reproach, *Victoria* has no more to do.

VESTA. If that be the case, I am sure that they will not keep alive the sacred fire in my temple. Heavens! what will become of my poor virgins?

MERCURY. O not a hair of their heads will be touched venerable Vesta:—they will be suffered very quietly to starve.

QUIRINUS. How times alter! Once it was a great misfortune for the whole Roman people, if the sacred fire on the altar of Vesta went out.

MOMUS. And now a great deal more noise would ensue, if the profane fire of a Roman tavern were to go out, than if the vestals were to let out theirs twice in a week.

QUIRINUS. But who is to be patron of the state in my room?

MERCURY. Saint PETER, with the double key, has obtained this office.

QUIRINUS. Saint PETER, with the double key! and who is he?

MERCURY. I myself do not rightly know; ask Apollo: perhaps he can give you better information.

APOLLO. He is a man, Quirinus, who by his successors will govern half the world for eight hundred years; although he was only a poor fisherman.

QUIRINUS. How? Is the world to be governed by fishermen?

APOLLO. By a certain class of them, the *fishers of men*, who, in a very ingenious net called the *Decretals*, will by degrees catch all the nations and princes of Europe. Their commands will pass for divine oracles, and a piece of sheep-skin sealed with saint Peter's fisher's ring, will have the power to make and unmake kings.

QUIRINUS. This Saint Peter, with his double key, must be a master-wizard.

APOLLO. Very far from it. The most surprising things in the world always take place, as thou shouldst long ago have known, in the most simple and natural manner imaginable. The vollenge, which overwhelms a whole village, was at first but a little snow-ball; and a stream, that floats a fleet, is originally a trickling rill. Why should not the followers of this Galilæan fisherman have been able, in a course of centuries, to make themselves masters of Rome, and finally of half the world, by means of a new religion, of which they are become the high-priests, assisted by the new moral and political system which they have contrived to graft on it. Were not you merely herdsman to the king of Alba, who was himself but a pigmy potentate, before you became chieftain of all the banditti in Latium, and patched together that eyrie of plunder which at length became the metropolis, and queen of the world? Saint PETER, in his life-time indeed, made no great figure: but the day will come in which Emperors shall hold the stirrup for his successors, and Queens shall kiss their feet, kneeling.

QUIRINUS. What may not he live to see, who is immortal?

APOLLO. Time indeed is requisite, and not a little sleight, to bring the art of fishing men to this pass;

but the fish which they catch are not all of the wisest.

QUIRINUS. Nevertheless, we are, and are to remain abolished.

MERCURY. I fear that no restoration is to be hoped.

SEVERAL GODS. Rather no immortality, than survive such events!

JUPITER. My dear sons, uncles, nephews, and cousins, jointly and severally, I see that you receive this little revolution, (the approach of which I have long been calmly observing,) more tragically than it deserves. Sit down once more in your places, and let us talk of these things over a glass of nectar, without vexation and without prejudice. Every thing in nature has its period: all is changeable; and so are also the opinions of mankind. They alter with circumstances; and, were we to reflect what a difference fifty years makes between the grandson and his forefather, it would really not astonish us that the world, in one or two millenniums, should gradually seem to acquire a new face:—for at bottom it is but *seeming:* it remains, though under other masks and names, the same comedy still. The weak people below have displayed their superstition in respect to us; and if a few among you are flattered by it, you are wrong. Why should we grudgingly hear that mankind are growing wiser? by heaven! it is not *too soon.* As yet, however, this may not be expected. They indeed always flatter themselves that the last folly, which they find out, will be the last that they commit. Hope of better times is the eternal chimæra, by which they have ever been deceived, and ever will be: because they will not discover that not the times, but their own incurable folly, is the cause of their ill-being. It is once for all their lot to enjoy nothing purely: but, when they grow

tired of one folly, as children become disgusted with a tattered doll, they cast it away for another, with which they often fare worse than with the first. This time, indeed, there is every appearance of their gaining by the change: but I know them too well not to foresee that in this wise they cannot be bettered:—for, if WISDOM herself were to descend, and visibly to dwell among them, they would not cease to trick her out with feathers and tinsel, and bells and baubles,—till they had made her like FOLLY. Believe me, gods, the triumphal song, which they are at this moment raising for the glorious victory they have won over our defenseless images, is a croak ominous of evil to posterity. They think to better their condition, and are flying from the shower to the sleet. They are tired of us, and will have nothing to do with us: so much the worse for *them:* we need them not. If their priests proclaim that we are impure and evil spirits, that an ever-burning sulphurcous pool is our mansion, what matters it to me or you? How can it signify to us what the half-reasoning sons of earth think of us, what relation they suppose to exist between us, and whether they besmoak us with a disgusting mixture of reeking sacrifices, and frankincense; or with the brimstone of Pluto's dominions. Neither mounts up to our abode. They misapprehend us, you will say, since they withdraw from our service: did they comprehend us better when they served us? What these poor folks call their religion is *their* affair, not *ours.* Only they have to gain or lose by conducting themselves reasonably or unreasonably; and their posterity, when they feel the effects of the unwise decrees of their Valentinians, their Gratians, their Theodosiuses, will have cause enough to regret the rash inno-

vations, which heap on their giddy heads a flood of new and intolerable evils; of which the world, so long as it was attached to the ancient faith or superstition, had no idea. It were otherwise, if, by the new institutions they were to be benefited. Which of us could or would take that amiss at their hands? Quite the contrary: they resemble a man, who, to expel a trifling disorder, with which he might have grown as old as Tithon, brings on himself ten others. They raise, for instance, a great outcry against *our priests*, because they entertained the people, who are and must be credulous every where, with illusions; from which, however, the state as well as themselves derived advantage. Will *their priests* conduct themselves better? At this very moment they are laying the foundation of a superstition, which will be useful chiefly to themselves; which, instead of giving stability to the political constitution, will confuse and undermine all civic duties; —a superstition, which, like lead in the head, will suppress and exclude every sound idea of natural and moral things. When we have said the worst of the superstition that has hitherto prevailed, it must be acknowledged that it is more humane, more innocent, and more beneficent, than the new one which supplants it. Our priests were infinitely more harmless people than these to whom they are now to give way. Those enjoyed their authority and their revenues in peace, bore with every one, and attacked no man's faith. These are ambitious and intolerant, pursue one another with active fury for unmeaning phrases, decide by majorities what is to be spoken of things unspeakable, and treat all those, who think and talk otherwise, as the foes of God and man. That the priests of the gods had come into collision with the civil magistrate,

or otherwise troubled the public repose, had scarsely happened for a series of ages before these vehement iconoclasts broke loose: but the new priesthood, since its party has become the favourite, has never ceased to throw the world into convulsion. As yet, their pontifexes work under ground: but in a short time they will snatch at the sceptres of kings, call themselves vice-gerents of their divinity, and under this title claim an unprecedented authority both in heaven and on earth. Our priests, it is true, were naturally enough not very anxious promoters, neither were they declared enemies, of philosophy; from which, under the protection of the law, they feared nothing: much less did they aspire to bring under their jurisdiction the thoughts and opinions of mankind, and to prevent the free circulation of them in society. Theirs on the contrary, who, as long as they were the weaker party, managed to have reason on their side, and to place her foremost in every contest; now, that she would be hostile to their further progress, are going to dismiss her, and will not rest till they have made every thing dark about them, withdrawn from the people all means of information, and branded the free use of natural judgement as the first of crimes. Formerly, when they themselves still lived on alms, the sleek face and courtly manner of our priests was an abomination: but, now that they glide along with swollen sails, the moderate income of our temples, which they have seized, is much too little to gratify the wants of their pride and vanity. Already have their pontifexes at Rome, through the liberality of some superannuated rich matrons, on whose enthusiastic sensibility they well know how to play, obtained donations and legacies, which put it in their power to outdo the first personages in

the empire in splendor and expense. Yet all these sources, though ever swelling by the influx of new streams, will not satisfy the insatiable. They will invent a thousand methods to tax the simplicity of rude and deluded men, and even convert the *sins of the world* into gold mines: and, in order to render these more productive, they will imagine a monstrous number of new sins, of which the Theophrastuses and Epictetuses had no suspicion. But why do I say all this? what boots it *us* what these people do or leave undone, and how well or ill they will employ their new authority over the sick imaginations of men—crippled in mind and body by slavery and debauchery? Even the seducers are themselves deceived; even they know not what they do. It becomes us, who see all this, to treat them with gentleness like sick and disordered persons; and, without any view to their gratitude or ingratitude in future, to do them all the service for which their own ignorance will allow the opportunity. Unhappy men! whom but yourselves are yen ijuring, thus by choice to forgo that beneficent influence under which Athens became the school of wisdom and of art, and Rome the legislatress and queen of the earth; by which both arrived at a pitch of culture, to which even the better descendants of the barbarians, who are about to divide among them the lands and the riches of these Greeks and Romans, will never again be able to rise. For what must become of men, from whom the Muses and the Graces, Philosophy and the embellishing arts of life, and all the pleasures of refinement, are withdrawing with the gods their inventors and patrons? I see at one glance all the evil which will burst in to replace the good, all the deformity and monstrosity which these destroyers of the beautiful will heap toge-

ther on the ruins of the works of genius, wisdom, and art,—and I feel disgusted at the sight. Away with it! For, as sure as I am Jupiter Olympius, it shall not for ever remain so; although centuries must roll by before mankind will have reached the lowest abyss of declension, and centuries again before, by our assistance, they shall have worked themselves out of the mire. The time shall come at which they will seek us anew, again call on our assistance, and acknowledge that they are nothing without us. The time shall come at which, with unwearied toil, they will lift out of the dust every broken or disfigured remnant of the works, which, beneath our influence, quitted the hands of our favourites; or dig for them amid rubbish, wreck, and ruin; and vainly exhaust themselves in affected enthusiasm, with striving to imitate those miracles of true inspiration, and of the real presence of divine power.

APOLLO. Yes, Jupiter, most assuredly the time will come, and I see it before me in all the splendor of actual existence. They shall again exalt our statues, gaze on them with the shudder of feeling, and with devout admiration make them the models of their own idols, which in barbarian hands were become abominations, and O! what a triumph! their very pontifexes will be proud of building to us, under other names, the most magnificent temples!

JUPITER, *(with a goblet of nectar in his hand.)* Here 's a hail and welcome to futurity! *(To Minerva.)* —to that period, my daughter, at which thou shalt have transformed all Europe into a new Athens, filled with Lycæums and Academies; and at which, even from the Caledonian wilderness, the voice of philosophy shall more freely and loudly resound, than of yore from the halls of Athens and Alexandria!

MINERVA, *(shaking her head.)* I am glad, Jupiter, to see thee so courageous under the existing aspect of things: but thou must pardon me, if I as little believe in a new Athens, as in a new Olympia.

QUIRINUS, *(to Mercury.)* I cannot forget this Saint Peter, with his double key, who is to be my successor. What is this key, an emblematical or a real, a natural or a magical key? Whence has he it? What is he to unlock with it?

MERCURY. All that I can tell about it, Quirinus, is, that with this key he can, when he pleases, unlock the gates of Heaven or of Tartarus.

QUIRINUS. He is very welcome to unlock Tartarus; but *heaven* too, that is of more consequence!

MERCURY. In fact, they have made every preparation for peopling heaven with so monstrous an assortment of new divinities of their stamp, that for us old godships there will soon be no more room left.

JUPITER. Leave that to my care, Hermes. Our temples and estates on earth they can easily take from us: but in Olympus we have been established too long to suffer expulsion;—and as a proof of our complete impartiality, we will concede to these new Romans the right of apotheosis, on the same conditions as to the ancient. As I hear that most of their candidates, who lay claim to this increase of rank, are not persons of the best company, with St. Peter's permission, we shall always undertake a short investigation of the merits of those whom we are desired to admit. If his other qualities and merits can claim a place among us, no objection shall be made to the golden circle about his head, and Momus himself shall not be allowed to reproach him with the miracles attributed to his *bones* or to his *wardrobe*.

JUNO. With the men you must do as you please, Jupiter; but as to the ladies, I must beg to be excused.

VENUS. It is said that there are very elegant women among them.

JUPITER. Of that, when the case happens, we will talk further. A fresh goblet, Antinous!

VIII.

JUPITER, NUMA.

JUPITER. How comes it, Numa, that for some time past we have not seen thee at the table of the gods?

NUMA. The news which Mercury lately brought us from Rome—

JUPITER. Of my being formally dethroned by a decree of the senate?

NUMA. —Allowed me no peace of mind, till I had seen with my own eyes how things stood.

JUPITER. Well, and what dost thou think of them?

NUMA. I say it with a heavy heart, Jupiter, though probably I acquaint thee with nothing new: thy authority among men seems irretrievably lost.

JUPITER. Didst thou not hear what Apollo lately foretold at table? "That a time should come when our images would be replaced over new altars, and again venerated with shudders of delight; when pontiffs would be proud to consecrate new temples to them under other names; when all Europe would become a second Athens filled with Lycæums and Academies; when Minerva and the Muses would be invoked even amid the Caledonian and Scandinavian wildernesses, and the voice of philosophy be heard there not less than of old in the schools of Greece and Alexandria."

NUMA. A very remote sort of consolation, and at best a play on words! It is as though a Chaldean soothsayer had comforted Alexander the Great, when dying of a fever at Babylon in the midst of his honors and enjoyments, with the assurance, that, two thousand years afterwards, an emperor of Germany would wear his image on a ring. Such a thought may be amusing enough while one is well, but is a poor compensation for the loss of the first throne in the universe.

JUPITER. I should have thought, friend Numa, that thy sojournment in Olympus had been sufficient to have rectified thy opinions of such things.

NUMA. I know very well that a decree of the Roman senate cannot rob thee of the influence which thou hast in the lower world, but—

JUPITER, *(smiling.)* Out with all thou thinkest; my ear has for some time past been very tolerant.

NUMA. This influence cannot appear to thee very important, or I do not comprehend how thou canst suffer thyself to be deprived of the divine authority, and exalted privileges, enjoyed by thee for so many centuries in the whole Roman world, without lifting up a finger in opposition.

JUPITER. If my Flamen were not to comprehend this, well and good: but thou, Numa—

NUMA. To speak sincerely, Jupiter, although I may in some measure be considered as the founder of the old Roman religion, it was never my intention to give more hold to the superstition of the people than was essential to their civilization. I changed, indeed, nothing fundamental in the service of those gods, whom old and rooted opinions had long put in possession of public veneration:—but I was uniformly attentive to leave the way open for a purer knowledge of the Supreme

Being; and I took precautions against the coarser kinds of idolatry, by forbidding to expose, for veneration in the temples, images of the Divinity, either in an animal or human form. I at that time considered the different persons and names which tradition had deified, either as symbols of the invisible and inscrutable powers of nature, or as men whom the gratitude of posterity had exalted to the rank of guardian geniuses, for great services to social and civil life.

JUPITER. In this last opinion, at least, it is clear thou wast not much deceived; however I may differ from thee with respect to images.

NUMA. Had there been in Latium in my time such artists as Phidias, perhaps they might have reformed my own notion.

JUPITER. Since thou hast never taken us for any thing but what we are, Numa, whence thy surprise that we should suffer the inhabitants of earth to think nothing at all of us?

NUMA. The habit of living among you, and of seeing you so constantly in possession of the adoration of mankind, may be the cause. Both have placed you with respect to me in so mysterious a twilight, and have insensibly given me so high an opinion of your nature and sublimity—in short, I own it would cost me infinite pains to accustom myself to any other point of view.

JUPITER. I am almost inclined, for once, to break through this twilight, and to withdraw the veil from the secrets of my family—about which so many worthy people on earth have idly crack'd their wits.

NUMA. I am certain *thou* wilt lose nothing by it.

JUPITER. One always gains by truth, friend Numa. Thou knowest that none of us Olympians, long as we

have existed, and far as our views extend, can point out the period at which this immeasurable WHOLE began. On the other hand, it may with equal probability be maintained that, of its visible parts, not one has always been as it is. Thus the earth, which we once inhabited, has sustained many great revolutions, of which some traces remain in the traditions of the more ancient nations, (such as the Goths, Hindoos, and Egyptians,) that the earth was once the dwelling-place of Gods. In fact, the inhabitants of the earth at that pristine period, if they may be called *men*, were a sort of men bearing much the same relation to the present, as the Jupiter Olympius of Phidias bears to the Priapuses of fig-tree wood, set up as scarecrows in the orchards: so much did they excel the men of after-times in size and beauty of figure, in bodily strength and vigor of mind! With them, and through them, the earth was in a state of perfection, worthy of its then inhabitants: but, after some millenniums, great changes took place. A part of the descendants of the first inhabitants degenerated in various climates to which their increase had driven them. Unusual events, earthquakes, inundations, and vulcanoes, altered the face of the planet; while some lands were swallowed by the ocean, others were laid bare; and the majority of these primæval races perished amid the convulsion of things. Chance might here and there bring together a Deucalion and a Pyrrha: but their successors soon relapsed from want and misery into brutish wildness. Meanwhile, the earth gradually recovering from the chaotic state, which was a natural consequence of those terrible convulsions, constantly became fitter to afford refuge and nourishment to its new inhabitants. The fresh families, which repeopled it, nourished themselves

sparingly, by hunting and fishing, and when these failed, with acorns and other wild fruits. They dwelt mostly in caves and forests, and knew not even the use of fire. Fortunately, a tribe of the earlier and more perfect race of men had preserved itself amid the heights of Imaus, in full enjoyment of all the advantages of the arts and sciences that their forefathers had invented. By similar catastrophes, compelled to abandon its hereditary dwelling-place, this colony spread toward south and west, and, wherever it arrived, its appearance was like that of beneficent deities:—for they brought, beside a formed and cultivated language, those mild manners and arts, of which no longer any traces remained among the savage men of the wilderness; and the want of which degraded them to this inhuman brutality. Thou mayst conceive, friend Numa, that they were received by these poor creatures *like Gods*, and that, by the good they imparted in the arts of pasturage and husbandry; by becoming the creators of a new earth; by the social life which they instituted; by the towns which they founded and to which they gave laws; by the lovely arts of the Muses, which they employed to diffuse softer manners and pleasures more refined; thou mayst conceive, I say, that by all these benefits, they deserved of mankind to be honoured after their death (the natural consequence of which was an ascent into this purer region) by a thankful posterity, as guardian geniuses. Nor wilt thou think it surprising, that those, who formerly were so useful to the human race, should, after their transit into a higher state of being, still take a concern in the men who received from them what made them *men;* and in general should be anxious for the preservation of that, of which they were in some measure the creators.

NUMA. Now, Jupiter, I clearly conceive what hitherto I have but dimly comprehended.

JUPITER. I hope, too, thou canst conceive why I said, I could very well be contented, that men should advance so far in information as to take us for no more than we really are. Superstition and priestcraft, powerfully supported by poets, artists, and mythologists, had gradually transformed the service paid to us (in which we took a pleasure merely from its beneficial influence on mankind) into a stupid idolatry, which neither could nor should continue; which was necessarily undermined by the progress of knowledge; and, like all other human things, was to crumble in pieces. How could I desire that any thing should not happen, which was to happen by the eternal laws of necessity?

NUMA. These fanatical innovators, however, are not satisfied with purifying an ancient worship founded on such great benefits; they disturb and annihilate it. They rob you even of what is your strict due; and, very far from merely lowering to the plain truth the opinions of the people concerning the gods of their forefathers, they push their absurdity and impious audacity so far as even to call you evil dæmons and hellish spirits, and treat you as such.

JUPITER. Be not so warm, friend Numa. While my altars still smoaked, had I not to listen to every absurd and indecent tale, with which the poets, at my expense, amused their applauding hearers? Little can it concern me what is said or thought of me below, now that the worship of Jupiter has ceased to be useful to mankind. Should I compel them with thunderbolts to be more respectful? What can it signify to me whether they assign me a dwelling in Olympus or

in Tartarus? Am I not here secured against all effect from their opinions? Will Ganymede pour me out one shell the less of nectar?

NUMA. But to them, Jupiter, it signifies, whether, by abolishing all intercourse between you, they will not deprive themselves of the advantages which the world has hitherto derived from your government.

JUPITER. I thank thee for thy good opinion, Pompilius. There are long heads below, who have not quite so high a notion of my influence over human affairs; and, every thing considered, they may not be wholly wrong. One cannot do more for people than they are capable of receiving. I was never fond of working miracles; and thus every thing, for the most part, goes on its own way,—madly enough, sometimes, as thou seest, but in the main tolerably;—and thus, I believe, things will continue to go on. Whatever I can contribute to the general good, without forgoing my repose, I shall always perform with pleasure: but to turn enthusiast, and offer myself a sacrifice for the sake of fools and ingrates, is not Jupiter's way, I assure thee, friend Numa!

The Stranger appears.

NUMA. Who is this approaching us? Dost thou know him, Jupiter?

JUPITER. Not that I recollect. There is a something in his appearance which announces no common man.

STRANGER. Is it allowed to take a part in your discourse? I own that it has attracted me from a considerable distance.

JUPITER, *(apart.)* A new species of magnetism!—*(To the Stranger.)* Thou knowest then the subject of our conversation?

STRANGER. I possess the gift of being where I

please; and when two of you are seeking truth, I seldom fail visibly or invisibly to be the third.

NUMA, *(low, to Jupiter.)* A singular personage!

JUPITER, *(without heeding Numa.)* Then thou art a very good companion, I shall be glad to be acquainted with thee.

NUMA, *(to the Stranger.)* May one ask thy name, and whence thou comest?

STRANGER. Neither signifies aught to the matter of which ye were conversing.

JUPITER. We spoke merely of facts; and these appear, as thou knowest, to every spectator, according to his situation, and to the construction of his optics, differently.

STRANGER. Yet every thing can be viewed aright only from one point of view.

NUMA. And that is—

STRANGER. The centre of the whole.

JUPITER, *(to Numa.)* Behind that lurks very much —or nothing at all. *(To the Stranger.)* Thou knowest, then, the whole?

STRANGER. Yes.

NUMA. What callest thou its centre?

STRANGER. Perfection; from which all is equidistant, and to which all is approaching.

NUMA. How does every thing appear to thee from this point of view?

STRANGER. Not partially, not what it is in single places and periods, not as it relates to these or those things, not as it loses or gains by being plunged into the atmosphere of human opinions or passions, not as it is poisoned by folly or by corruption: but as it relates to the whole in its outset, progress, and event, in its internal tendency, in all its forms, motions, effects,

and consequences—that is, in as much as it contributes to the eternal progress toward perfection.

JUPITER. This is sound enough.

NUMA. From this point of view, what thinkest thou of the topic which we were discussing at thy arrival —of the great catastrophe, which, in these days, has overthrown, without retrospect or exemption, whatever has been for ages most sacred and most respectable to the human race?

STRANGER. It took place necessarily, for it had long been preparing; and, as thou knowest, a mere puff of wind is at last sufficient to throw down an old ill-joined and decayed building, founded on sand.

NUMA. Yet was it so magnificent an edifice, so venerable for its antiquity, so simple in its variety, so beneficial by the shelter which humanity, law, and the security of states, had long found beneath its lofty arches—that it had surely been wiser to improve than to overthrow it. Our philosophers of Alexandria had imagined such fine plans, not only to restore its former authority, but to give it additional lustre, and especially a symmetry, a beauty, and a convenience before unknown. It was a pantheon of such vast extent, and of such dexterous architecture, that all the religions in the world—even this new one, could it but be tolerant,—might have found place within it.

STRANGER. It is a pity that, with all these apparent advantages, it was constructed only on a quicksand. As for tolerance, how canst thou fancy that, in a thing of such importance, truth and illusion should be compatible?

NUMA. That may very well be, if men will but bear with one another: men who are never more deceived than when they think themselves exclusively possessed of truth.

STRANGER. If to be deceived be not their destination—which thou wilt not maintain—it neither can nor will be their lot for ever to wander in illusion and deception, like sheep without a shepherd. Between darkness and light, twilight is no doubt better than gloom, but only as the passage into the pure and perfect day. The dawn is now risen; and wouldst thou grieve that night and twilight are passed away?

JUPITER. Thou art fond of allegory, young man, I perceive. For my part, I like to speak out. Probably, thou meanest that mankind will be happier with this new order of things. I wish so too, though I can discover but faint appearances of it.

STRANGER. Undoubtedly, things will go better, infinitely better with unfortunate mortals. Truth will put them in possession of freedom, which is the most indispensable condition of happiness; for truth alone maketh free.

JUPITER. I have heard this to satiety, five hundred years ago.—Positions of this kind are as incontrovertible, and contribute just as much to the salvation of the world, as the great truth that once one is—one. As soon as thou shalt bring me intelligence that the poor folk below, since a large portion of them have believed differently from their forefathers, are become better men than their predecessors, then will I acknowledge thee as the messenger of good tidings.

STRANGER. The corruption of mankind was too great for the most extraordinary provisions at once to remedy the evil: but most certainly they will be better off, when the truth shall have made them free.

JUPITER. I think so too: but in saying all this, little more seems to me to be said, than that, as soon as men shall be good and wise, they will cease to be fool-

ish and corrupt—or that, when the golden age shall arrive, in which every one has his fill, nobody will die of hunger.

STRANGER. I see the period advancing, at which each who shall not obstinately shut his heart against truth, will through its means arrive at a perfection, of which your philosophers had no idea.

JUPITER. Hast thou been initiated into the mysteries of Eleusis?

STRANGER. I know them as well as if I had.

JUPITER. Then thou knowest the final object of these mysteries?

STRANGER. To live happy, and to die with the hope of a better life.

JUPITER. Thou seemest to me a sincere friend of human kind. Knowest thou aught more beneficial to mortals than this?

STRANGER. Yes.

JUPITER. Let us hear.—

STRANGER. REALLY *to give them what the mystagogues of Eleusis* PROMISED.

JUPITER. I fear that is more than thou or I can perform.

STRANGER. Thou hast not tried, Jupiter.

JUPITER. Thou wilt readily presume, that I have not arrived at the honors, which have been paid to me for some centuries by so many great and polished nations, without having deserved something at their hands?

STRANGER. That may be. He who will do no more for the good of men, than he can do without forgoing his repose, will exert no very saving powers. I acknowledge that mine has been a more formidable toil.

JUPITER. Thou pleasest me, young man. At thy age, this amiable enthusiasm, which sacrifices itself for

others, is a real merit. Who could offer himself up for mankind without loivng them? Who could love them without thinking better of them than they deserve?

STRANGER. I think neither too ill nor too well of them. Their misery wounds me. I see that it can be helped; and helped it shall be.

JUPITER. Thou art full of courage and good-will; but thou art yet young. The folly of terrestrials has not matured thee. At my years, thou wilt sing in another strain.

STRANGER. Thou speak'st as I expected from thee.

JUPITER. It vexes thee, methinks, to hear me speak so. Thou hast imagined some great plan for the good of the human race; thou burnest with the desire of executing it; in it thou livest and movest. Thy far-seeing glance shows thee all thy advantages. Thy courage swallows all difficulties. Thou hast staked thine existence on it—how shouldst thou not expect to bring it to bear?—but thou hast to do with men. Take it not amiss that I speak to thee as I think; it is the privilege of age and experience. Thou resemblest, methinks, a tragic poet, who attempts to have an excellent piece performed by maimed, dwarfish, and limping actors. Once, again, friend, thou art not the first, who has attempted to execute something great with men: but, I tell thee, so long as they are what they are, nothing comes of such experiments.

STRANGER. Therefore we must make new men of them.

JUPITER. New men—that is easily said—if thou canst do that;—but I think that I understand thee. Thou wouldst form them anew, give them another and a better figure; the *model* is in being, thou hast only

to shape after *thyself.* Alas! this is not all. The clay for thy new creation nature has given; and that must be taken as it is. Think of me awhile hence. Thou wilt have taken all possible pains with thy potter's work, and when it comes out of the oven, thou wilt behold to thy confusion—

STRANGER. The clay is of itself not so bad as thou believest; it may be purified and tempered as much as I need, to form out of it new and better men.

JUPITER. That will delight me. Hast thou tried the experiment?

STRANGER. Undoubtedly.

JUPITER. I mean on the large scale:—for that among a thousand pieces one should succeed proves little.

STRANGER, *(after some hesitation.)* If the experiment on a large scale has not yet answered to my full intentions, I know at least why it could not be otherwise. It will in time do better.

JUPITER. In time?—From time one always hopes the best. Without this hope, who would undertake any thing great? We shall see how time will answer thy expectations. For the next thousand years, I would promise thee no great success.

STRANGER. Thou hast, I see, but a narrow measure, old King of Crete. A thousand years are but as one day compared with the period, which the completion of the great work requires, of forming the whole human race into a single family of good and happy beings.

JUPITER. Thou art in the right. How many thousands of years the hermetic philosophers toiled after their stone, without bringing it to bear; and what is the work of these sages compared with thine?

STRANGER. Thy pleasantry is ill-timed. The work which I have undertaken is fully as possible, as that the seed of a cedar should grow up to a large tree: it is true that the cedar does not attain its perfection so speedily as the poplar.

JUPITER. Nor would any one grudge thee time to accomplish thy great work, if that were all:—but the certain and monstrous evils, for centuries together, with which men are to purchase the hope of an uncertain good, give to the enterprize another shape. What are we to think of a plan, which should be beneficial to the human race, and in its execution succeeds so ill, that a considerable portion of them, and for a period of which the end is not to be foreseen, have been made unhappier, and, which is more lamentable, still worse in head and in heart than before? I appeal to what is apparent;—and yet all that we have seen, since the fall of the brave enthusiast Julian, is but a prelude to the immeasurable mischief which the new hierarchy must bring on these poor wights, who are drawn into the unexpected snare by every new tune that is whistled to them.

STRANGER. All these evils of which thou complainest in the name of mankind,—thou on whose heart their sufferings never sat heavy,—are neither essential conditions, nor even effects of the great plan of which we are talking. They are the impediments, which withstand it from without, and with which the light will have to struggle but too long till it shall have entirely overcome the darkness. Is the fault in the wine if it be spoiled in mouldy casks? As it is in the nature of things that mankind should, by imperceptible degrees, advance in wisdom and in goodness, as their amelioration is resisted by so many foes both from

within and from without, as the difficulties multiply with every victory, and even the most well directed means, merely because they pass through human heads, and borrow the instrumentality of human hands, again become new impediments,—how can it appear surprizing that I am not able to procure for my brethren the happiness which I intend them at a cheaper rate? How gladly would I have abolished all their misery at once! But even I can do nothing against the eternal laws of necessity: it is enough that the time will at length come.

JUPITER, *(a little out of humor.)* Well, then, let it come; and the poor wretches, for whom thou hast such good intentions, in the mean time must manage for the best. As I said, my foresight does not reach far enough to judge of a plan so comprehensive and so involved. It is fortunate that we are immortal, and may live to see its evolution, however many Platonic years we must wait for it.

STRANGER. My plan, vast as it seems, is the simplest in the world. The way, by which I am certain of effecting general felicity, is the same by which I lead each individual to happiness; and a pledge to me of its certainty is that there can be no other. I now end as I began: it is impossible not to be deceived, so long as we consider things piecemeal, and as they appear by themselves and insulated. They are nothing in reality but what they are in relation to the whole; and perfection, the centre which unites all in one, towards which all tends, and in which all shall finally repose, is the only point of view whence every thing can be seen aright. Herewith, farewell! [*He vanishes.*

NUMA, *(to Jupiter.)* What sayst thou to this apparition, Jupiter?

JUPITER. Ask me fifteen hundred years hence.

The twenty-sixth volume contains, (1) Alceste; (2) Rosamond; (3) The Choice of Hercules; (4) The Birth-day; (5) The Judgement of Midas, five operas, which were set to music by Schweitzer, and performed in 1773 and 1774 with success on the theatre at Weimar. Two dissertations follow on the history and theory of the opera; a third on the fable of Rosamond; and a fourth on that of Richard Lion-heart, which Wieland had translated from a french piece of Sedaine. Of each in its order.

Admetus is dangerously ill. Alceste is waiting the answer of the oracle concerning his fate: her sister Parthenia brings word that Admetus will recover, if any one is devoted for him; but that even his old father had refused. Alceste devotes herself in a rimed address to the Parcæ, which is sung: the rest of the dialogue, the recitative, is in blank verse.

In the second act, the victim is accepted, and Admetus is recovered; but has to witness the fatal illness and vicarious sacrifice of his wife, who takes leave of her children and husband, and dies. In the third, Hercules arrives, and finds his friend Admetus mourning over the urn of Alceste; he offers to descend to Tartarus to bring back the departed one. In the fourth act the funeral rites continue. In the fifth, Hercules returns; and, after preparing Admetus for the catastrophe, presents to him the restored Alceste. A joyful chorus closes the piece.

The dialogue of this tragedy is exquisitely, classically, beautiful; the choral odes, which are in rime, less so: the finest passages are indeed transplanted from Euripides, but the general structure of the fable is more tasteful than that of the greek poet, and the various scenes of tenderness, if possible, still more pathetic: so Sophocles would have executed the poem.

The plot of Rosamond is in some degree borrowed from Addison. At least queen Elinor in like manner administers poison to her, which is exchanged by the assistant Belmont for a sleeping draught: King Henry returns, while Rosamond is supposed to be dead: but learns from Belmont that he may expect her recovery, which takes place. The concluding scene will best explain the new catastrophe.

[*The theatre represents a vast hall in the royal palace. A throne is placed at the upper end. Knights and nobles take their places on either side. The king enters, accompanied by Belmont, and ascends the throne. Rosamond follows, in the habit of a novice, accompanied by females from the convent, where she had projected to take the veil, and remains at a respectful distance, in front of the scene, on one side.*]

KING HENRY II *speaks.*

Copartners of my victories and glory,
Nobles of Albion, whose loyal courage
I oft have witness'd in the field of battle,
It now befits us in our father's halls
Again to cultivate the homely virtues.
Happy who, with his children's mother, shares
The bliss of mutual love and confidence,
And spends the years of peace in household comfort.—
To England's king this solace is denied;
Beneath his gilded canopies of state
A bosom-serpent harbours.—Elinor
Has cast away all claim upon my heart,
Has by her treason forfeited all right
To share my crown—a poison-mixeress
Ought not to sully England's royal throne.
Let her to her own heritage return;
'T is seemly that her perfidy be punish'd.—
I put her from me——and to Rosamond

Transfer my heart and hand. You see her here;
Let your eyes judge if she be worthy of me.—
A miracle preserv'd her. Heaven's protection,
My choice, your love, combine in one decision,
And call her presence to adorn my throne.

CHORUS OF KNIGHTS.

Live, reign, our queen; live Rosamond for ever!
The throne of England be the prize of beauty.

CHORUS OF VIRGINS.

Thou fairest of the daughters of our country,
Be long the ornament of England's throne.

[*The king descends from his seat, and takes Rosamond by the hand, in order to lead her up to it: at this moment the doors of the hall are burst open, and queen Elinor, accompanied by armed knights, breaks in.*]

ELINOR.

And am I not expected at this feast?

HENRY.

Belmont, how happens this?

[*During the confusion, the queen advances strait to Rosamond, and plants a dagger in her bosom, before the attendants suspect her purpose.*]

ELINOR.

Die, traitress, I 'am revenged, and little reck
What fate awaits me: banishment, or death.

HENRY.

Unhappy Rosamond!

[*While the king and the attendants place Rosamond at the foot of the throne; the queen retires with her armed band, and the curtain drops.*]

The Choice of Hercules, the Birth-day, and Midas, are less remarkable as poems: nor do the Dissertations require commentary.

The twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth volumes contain the secret history of *Peregrinus Proteus*. The basis of the story is to be found in Lucian; who, in narrating the death of this cynic philosopher, puts into the mouth of a spectator a very unfavourable statement of his life and conduct. In this account by Lucian, the penetration of Wieland discovers ethic inconsistency, incompatible attributes of character, and moral impossibility. He undertakes, therefore, a fresh statement of the incidents, so as to account punctiliously for every report concerning Peregrinus which is preserved by Lucian, yet so as to assign him a character perfectly consistent and radically amiable, although he is the frequent dupe of enthusiastic hallucinations. The novel is thrown into the form of a dialogue in Elysium between Lucian and Peregrinus: the latter of whom particularizes enough of his early life to shew that, in his education, in his circumstances, and in his propensities, was already sown the seed of an inflammable and ardent imagination. In his immature youth, he had detected within himself a something *dæmonic*; and his idea of the supreme good was modified by this persuasion throughout life, and consequently the tenor of his pursuits. A love-adventure with Kallippe obliges him to remove from Parium to Athens; and calumny drives him to Smyrna. The more his peculiar ideas of ultimate felicity (endæmonia) unfold, the stronger becomes his desire of attaining, by the cultivation of the higher sort of magic, a communion with more exalted natures. One Menippus, with whom he converses on these topics, directs him to a daughter of Apollonius of Tyana,

resident at Halicarnassus. She intrusts to him manuscripts of her father, and she prescribes to him initiatory rites, for the purpose of conciliating the Venus Urania. He is indulged with a theophany. By degrees, he discovers that he has been the dupe of Mamilia Quintilla, a rich Roman widow, who wished to make him instrumental to her pleasures; and of Dioclea, a pantomime-dancer, who had personated the daughter of Apollonius. The scenery of this third section is so loosely luscious that it thoroughly cloys;[7] and in effect it tires the hero himself, who returns to Smyrna in a disappointed and melancholy mood: a natural consequence of the disappearance of that vivid scenery which had lately engrossed his attention. He is aroused from this intellectual listlessness, by falling in, (accidentally, as he supposes,) with an inexplicable but interesting stranger, who introduces him to an assembly of Christians at Pergamus; and from that moment a new mystic life, a regeneration of mind, begins within him. The stranger continues to act powerfully on him, to excite his curiosity and expectations, and, by dexterous but circuitous steps, to prepare and discipline the intended convert. A mysterious appointment to meet again precedes their sudden separation. A new guide attaches himself to Peregrinus, and introduces him to a family of Christians residing in a solitary part of the country; whose amiableness, harmony, and simplicity of manners, were calculated to make so deep an impression on his mind, as to inspire the settled wish of devoting his whole life to the society of persons so beautifully and holily virtuous. Peregrinus is at length

[7] It drew on the author an epigram in the *Xenien*, which appears to have been felt by the mode in which it was avenged: see the *Teutscher Merkur* for Jan. and Feb. 1797.

initiated into the mysteries of this pure and attractive sect; and he again meets the impressive stranger, who becomes known to him by the name of Kerinthus, and from whom he receives, as the reward of his growing zeal, a second grade of initiation. The property, which about this time he inherits from his father, is chiefly made over to the common stock of the religious society, into which he is now grafted; and he gradually obtains an apparently more intimate knowledge of its interior constitution and the spirit of its directors: who destine him, however, rather for their instrument than their confidant. He undertakes the office of a missionary: but, in consequence of the well-known edict of Trajan, he incurs imprisonment. The attentions of the faithful console the irksomeness of his confinement. A deaconess is sent to him with the offerings of affectionate charity; and she is no other than Dioclea, the priestess of Halicarnassus, and the sister of Kerinthus. Her explanations convince him that he has been hitherto the dupe of artifice, and the blind conductor of purposes of politic ambition. Through the management of Dioclea, he obtains his liberty: but he is become disgusted with the interior of a sect externally so pure, so lovely, and so insinuating. He now falls into a kind of misanthropy, which leads the way to his annexation to the order of Cynics; whose severity, whose privations, and whose erect independence, form his next idea of human perfection. He is drawn to Rome, and sets up for a distinguished scourge of corruption, and an avowed woman-hater. The empress Faustina (in whose character, incautious levity was a marked feature) becomes curious about the puritanic snarler; and, having laid a wager on the subject with a Roman lady, she contrives, without committing her

own dignity, to gain a victory over the misogyny of Peregrinus by attacking him on his weak side. He now becomes the town-talk, and the jest of the court and the metropolis. This increases his ill-humour with the world, from which he attempts to retire, and which he now fancies he can best serve by the spectacle of a voluntary death, which should demonstrate his confidence in the essentially *dæmonic* nature of man, and its necessary continuance through future existence. This leads to the catastrophe, which he announces to all Greece, and realizes at Olympia.

Many traits in the character of this honest enthusiast seem derived from the study of that of *Rousseau*. It is a new and masterly delineation, imbued with the profoundest knowledge of human nature; and it is so perfectly consonant with moral probability, that one can hardly imagine the tale of Lucian to have had any other substratum. So complete is the adaptation of every circumstance in the new story to the outline of the old one, that it seems the only possible solution of this moral ænigma, the only manner in which events *so* misrepresented could truly have passed: it presses on conviction with that degree of illusion which is confounded with reality. The erudite intimacy of Wieland with the manners and opinions of the age, and the sects, which he undertakes to characterize, is no where more conspicuous than in this novel; and the equity with which he depicts the pure morals of the family near Pitane, as naturally resulting from the religion of the Christians, is a tribute to impartiality not common among philosophers who are so perpetually busied in satirizing the priests. With all its insight into human nature, the whole work tends perhaps to chill the pursuer of the ardent virtues, and to insi-

nuate a loose sensuality: one would rather wish it to be seriously studied by those who chance to read it, than to see it very generally read.

The twenty-ninth volume opens with an admirable dissertation on the free use of reason in matters of faith. It has been entirely translated in the *Varieties of Literature;* and it well deserves a more than cursory perusal.

Essays on the French Revolution succeed, which are distinguished for calm and penetrating observation, for a poising equity of estimate, and for a discriminating urbanity of praise and censure.

Volume the thirtieth contains an account of the earlier essays of the Aeronauts. Next follows *The Secret of the Order of Cosmopolites,* which may be recommended to the consideration of our heresy-ferrets. The *Account of Nicolas Flamel* has appeared in the *Varieties of Literature.* The *Philosopher's Stone,* and the *Salamandrine,* are pleasing fairy tales: the latter accomplishes a prediction of Horace Walpole, that it would be possible to construct a good story, in which every thing should appear supernatural, and yet be naturally explained at last. The *Dialogue with a Parish Priest* is tedious and feeble: it attempts an apology for the author's frequent obscenities. The priest, among other things, asks, "Would you wish to find, in the hands of your daughter, your Idris, or your Comic Tales?" Wieland answers, "I should not put them into her hands: but I have so educated her, that, if she reads them, she will read them without contamination."

§ 14.

Reviewal of Wieland's Collective Works continued, vol. XXXI—XL—*Dialogues—Agathodæmon—Correspondence of Aristippus—Euthanasia—Hexameron of Rosenthal—Menander and Glycerion—Krates and Hipparchia—Translations—Juvenile Works—Conclusion.*

THE thirty-first volume contains twelve *Dialogues between a Pair of Tongues;* such seems to be the idiomatic rendering of what the Germans call *dialogues under four eyes,* and the French, more neatly, *tête-à-têtes.* They relate to phænomena of the French revolution: among them, in the second dialogue on the French oath of hatred to royalty, occurs the proposal, afterwards acted upon by the French, for investing Bonaparte with dictatorial power, as the most tried and efficient remedy for anarchy. This proposal, however natural and obvious a consequence of the known opinions and learning of Wieland, appeared, after its realization, like the inspired dictate of supernatural prescience;

> For old experience can attain
> To something like prophetic strain.

In order to destroy the merit of this guess, or counsel, the enemies of Wieland's sentiments attributed it to secret intelligence, conveyed through supposed confederacies of the illuminati. The vulgar (ambassadors belong sometimes to the vulgar) weakly credited this

imputation: the curs of anti-jacobinism were hallooed throughout Europe upon the sage of Osmanstadt: he was reviled and insulted as the hired mouth-piece of Parisian conspirators.

The most important of these dialogues is the tenth, entitled *Dreams Awake.* It is too long, and in its bearing too local, for transcription. It unfolds a project for reconstituting the German empire. It points out the practicability of assimilating the German constitution to the British; recommends bestowing on the imperial cities, and on the circles, or shires, a representation analogous to our house of commons; proposes to the petty sovereigns to accept a sort of peerage, under the name of dukes and athelings; and to the emperor, to assume an all-pervading sovereignty, and an efficacious executive power. After noticing the inefficiency of the German constitution for purposes of public defense, as became evident from the sacrifice of the left bank of the Rhine to France, the dialogists proceed to animadvert on the state of institution and opinion in Germany. They agree, that, of three possible forms of dissolution, one is approaching. These are—1st. A violent revolution, as in France; 2nd. A partition, as in Poland; 3rd. A constitutional reform, or consolidation of the minor sovereignties under the chief sovereign, to be accomplished by offering a donative of freedom to the people, which should purchase the transfer, or concentration, of their allegiance. After some reciprocal criticisms, the disputants agree to prefer this last disposition of their country.

The opinion of Wieland is in nothing a solitary opinion: he is rather an eclectic philosopher, than an original thinker; and collects, from the whole surface of Europe, the results of the best discussions, with an

equity which makes him in a remarkable degree the herald of public opinion, the representative of disinterested and instructed judges. He makes his political pamphlets, like his poems, by the process of inlaying; he veneers not with autochthonous wood, but with the finest; and he gives that exquisite fashion to his work, which secures its presence in the apartments of luxury and the palaces of sovereigns. His advice therefore is sure to be weighed by such as are within reach of those interior seats of political volition, which communicate to the practical world the critical and decisive impulse. The statesman reads Wieland to know what the world expects from his beneficence. The consolidation of Germany is the favourite project of the country; and whichever of the two courts, the Austrian or the Prussian, first offers to carry through the design on conditions favourable to the liberty of the subject, will probably accomplish the conquest or absorption of all Germany.

As works of art, these dialogues are not excellent: they abound with common-places and needless interlocutions: a great deal of conversation seems to have been introduced only to increase the number of sheets for the printer: the talkers assert often, reason sometimes, and demonstrate rarely: their drift is vague; their excursions rather resemble an airing, than a stage on a journey. There is not enough of dramatic distinction: both speakers are too voluble; both select their decorations and allusions with far-fetched appositeness; both have information and urbanity. The concluding dialogue between Geron and a stranger (that is, between Wieland and the young sovereign whom he aspires to counsel) has more dramatic merit than the rest: it holds up Marcus Antoninus, the au-

thor of the Meditations, as the very attainable model of a highly praiseworthy sway; and treats the art of reigning as one of the liberal pursuits, to excel in which is quite within reach of a gentleman of good taste, common attention, and appropriate ambition.

Vol. xxxii. Philostratus, who was born at Lemnos and educated at Athens, flourished as a rhetorician in Rome, under Septimius Severus, and was patronised by the literary taste of the empress Julia. He composed, at her instigation, a life of Apollonius of Tyana,[8] which has been translated into French and English, and has not unfrequently been employed by the world of philosophists, like Lucian's account of Alexander of Abonoteichos, as an antidote against the credulity that attributes to extraordinary persons supernatural powers. This biography of Apollonius, the best edition of which is that of Olearius, printed in 1709, at Leipzig, forms the *substratum* of Wieland's Agathodæmon, a novel in greek garments, which exactly fills his thirty-second volume.

The history of Apollonius, or of Agathodæmon, as he is here called, is not given as it *did* happen, but as it might have happened: a train of natural events being every where supposed, which were likely to initiate such marvellous and miraculous misrepresentations as have actually been made of the real Apollonius. Thus the legendary matter of Philostratus is plausibly accounted for; and a natural solution of those phenomena is attempted which heathen credulity received as true. All this is obviously designed as a side blow at other legends, or more than legends; and prepares

8 In the Monthly Magazine, vol. liii, p. 112, occurs a curious dissertation entitled: "Who was Apollonius of Tyana?" the author of which has evidently consulted Wieland's Agathodæmon.

a discussion, confined to the sixth and seventh books, of those events which occurred in Palestine during the origin of Christianity.

The four volumes, thirty-three to thirty-six, contain *Letters of Aristippus, and his friends.* Wieland supposes this philosopher, a native of Cyrene, to have visited Greece in the time of Socrates, and to have prolonged his stay in the several principal cities, until after the death of the sage.

Aristippus gives an account of this tour in a series of letters, which are sometimes addressed to his African friends, sometimes to the courtesan Lais, with whom he became intimate at Corinth, and sometimes to European authors and artists, whom he had met, and whose acquaintance he wishes to retain. He receives many letters in return, which sift or correct his own points of view. The court of Dion at Syracuse attracts Aristippus, tempts a long residence, and is pourtrayed with complacence. Every where what is remarkable in the public monuments, institutions, theatres, temples, and works of art, is carefully noticed. Whoever is distinguished among the men in poetry, oratory, literature, and philosophy, for moral, political, or military, rank, is diligently sought out. All is described with picturesque detail, commented with critical skill, and authenticated with comprehensive erudition: and thus a book of imaginary travels has been composed, analogous in its purpose and character to the voyage of the young Anacharsis.

Barthelemy dwells more on history and geography and politics; Wieland more on men and manners and opinions. Barthelemy has more vivacity, Wieland more garrulity; Barthelemy has more condensation, Wieland more completeness; Barthelemy aims at embellishment, Wieland at fidelity.

The thirty-seventh volume contains *Euthanasia*, three dialogues concerning the life after death, or the future state of the departed. A German doctor had published an account of the apparition of his deceased wife after her burial. This relation is here dissected, and referred to probable causes of illusion. Several ghost-stories pass in review; and the general inference is drawn, that experience supplies no adequate proof of the continued existence of the spirits of the dead.

The thirty-eighth volume contains the *Hexameron of Rosenthal*, a collection of agreeable tales in prose, which a party, assembled for a week in a country-house, alternately relate to one another daily. Perhaps it would have been wiser to entitle this volume a new Decameron, and to have included in it those three or four fairy tales, which lie scattered in disconnection among the preceding volumes.

The thirty-ninth is a classical, elegant, interesting, and valuable volume: it contains two of the best greek novels of Wieland told in his liveliest manner, and illustrated with his profoundest erudition. *Menander and Glycerion* relates the love of a comic poet for an Athenian flower-girl, whose disinterested attachment to her talented lover is most winningly pourtrayed.

In *Krates and Hipparchia*, a young lady of beauty and fortune attends in boy's clothes the lectures of a philosopher, falls in love with her tutor, and at length marries him with the consent of her family. This anecdote had been related, with some coarse circumstances, by Diogenes Laertius, but has been purged by Wieland of its improbabilities, and is become decorous and attractive. It was translated into English by Mr. Charles Richard Coke, of Norwich, the meritorious assistant at the British Museum.

The fortieth and succeeding volumes contain *Translations* of Lucian's works, illustrated with a biography and learned notes (this has been englished by the Rev. Mr. Tooke); of Horace's Epistle to Piso on the poetic art; of Cicero's letters, and some others. The juvenile works of Wieland close and complete the collection: they have been sufficiently alluded to (see p. 249) in the biography.

In looking back on this vast mass of diversified composition, the attention will chiefly centre on the epic efforts in prose and verse. Wieland's novels are of a form nearly peculiar. Wholly negligent, apparently, of living manners and opinions, he has laid the scene of all his fables in remote ages and countries, and is scrupulously attentive to the costume not only of the objects but of the very ideas introduced: yet he artfully indicates a perpetual analogy between the ways of acting and thinking in different times and places; he steadily keeps in view the general laws of human hallucination; and he is ever solicitous to inculcate the truism, that under other masks and names men are still repeating the same comedy. An enthusiast, tamed into a worldling by the delusions of a mistress and the lessons of a philosopher, is the favourite subject of his intellectual sculpture. For *pathetic*, and even for *highly comic* passages, one may long seek in vain: but for beautiful description, and delicately interesting situations, one is never at a loss: he does not aim at exciting passion, but at analyzing character: he seldom attains to dramatic vivacity: he produces a calm and placid, not a boisterous and turbulent delight,—the intoxication of the sharoot, not of the wine-flask.

It is observable that he seldom describes the scenery of mere nature. From the profusion of beautiful objects of art, among which his personages are exhibited to view, his fancy may be thought to have laid in its stock of decoration under the gilded cielings of the opera-house, not beneath the blue cope of heaven; and he seems more to have dwelt in the palace than on the mountain-side. He every where flatters the luxurious, and encourages a delicate sensuality: a stoic would call him "the sycophant of refinement;" an epicurean would style him "the philosopher of the Graces."[9] His writings are therefore adapted to attach the inhabitants of cities, and to find favor with the opulent, the travelled, and the polished: their whole impression is not made at first; they gain by repeated perusal. If not the greatest genius among the poets, he is the greatest poet among the geniuses of Germany.

Of Wieland's poetic works the most successful are his metrical romances. Wiser than Ariosto, he has not attempted to combine into a disjointed whole the several tales of knighthood which he has thrown into rime. Sometimes, (as in *Geron le Courtois,*) it is a single adventure which he versifies; sometimes, (as in *Oberon,*) it is a whole story-book to which he gives the form of an epopœa. Pagan legends also, and fairy tales, have often furnished him with a basis of narrative; for he bestrides with equal skill the Pegasus of Olympus, the Hyppogriffon of chivalry, and the Simoorg of Ginnistan. His omnipresent fancy can

9 If any living English poet is adapted to contend with Wieland for the prize of beautiful tell-tale, by his voluptuous imagery, picturesque delineation, and radiance of fancy, it is the author of the Fire-worshippers—if any one is adapted to rival the graceful narration and erudite costume of the classical novels, it is the author of the Epicurean.

evoke at will the divinities of every mythology, and enrobe them all with dazzling magnificence and classical propriety. Yet his heroes and heroines want, perhaps, a certain heroism of character: they are Sacripants, Zerbinos, and Rinaldos, Angelicas, and Armidas; they are neither Agamemnon, nor Achilles, nor Diomed, nor Clytemnestra, nor Andromache: but, if they win less on the admiration, they gain perhaps more on the affection. The youngest of the Graces, not the highest of the Muses, besought for him, of Apollo, the gift of song: Echo was his nurse, Pallas his preceptress, Venus his inspiress.

END OF VOL. II.

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